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CASSELL'S MAGAZINE.

HESTER MORLEY'S PROMISE.

BY HESBA STRETTON,

AUTHOR OF "THE DOCTOR'S DILEMMA," ETC. ETC.

CHAPTER THE FIRST

JOHN MORLEY, BOOKSELLER

LITTLE ASTON is one of those small Midland towns, lying in the midst of an agricultural district, which offer no attraction to tourists, and where very few

be any, hide themselves diligently from the microscopic scrutiny of the town. Murder has never stained its precincts with blood; suicide is almost unheard of; intrigue is unsuspected. There are scandals, but scandals of the gentler kind, such as



"LOOK AT ME, LITTLE HETTY!"

events seem to happen. Every family in it, even to the lowest classes, possesses a staid respectability and decency, which is chiefly the heritage of those who live in isolated places, divided from the busier and perhaps the more wicked world by a girdle of corn-fields and meadows. The population cannot be more than five thousand, which in these days constitutes little more than a family party, whose members must be very closely allied. A large proportion of the townspeople consist of professional men, and people with means, who keep up the tone of its society. The grosser vices, if there

one might whisper of one's own mother's son. From day to day, and from year to year, its narrow stream of life flows in commonplace channels, seldom quickened into rougher and swifter currents. There are births, deaths, and marriages; old men retiring from business, and young men attempting small innovations; but the town of Little Aston is always very orderly, and strictly respectable.

Some years ago the centre of respectability was the Market Square, and to dwell elsewhere was to be a grade or two lower in society, and to be inadmissible to the more select circle. But the next best

place was Chapel Street, opening out of the north-west corner of the Square. It was narrow, and very dull even on market days—the dulllest street in the town. The shops were dark and dingy, and about half-way along it, they gave place to small, poor houses, built capriciously, each one of differing height and size. Nearly at the end stood a large and ugly chapel, with a pretentious portico, supported by four square pillars of red brick, and surmounted by a pediment and architrave of blue and yellow tiles. This chapel gave its name to the street.

A few houses distant from the entrance into the Square, stood a very old and very dingy dwelling, which had undergone but little alteration from the date of its erection, a century and a half before. Not that there was any of the picturesqueness of antiquity about it; its aspect was only gloomy and weather-beaten, the windows being of small panes of discoloured glass, and its walls blackened by smoke and age. The roof formed three gables, and the moss and house-leek grew along the gutters, and choked up the water-pipes. It was a large building, occupying more basement than would have sufficed for two handsome modern houses. It was on the north side of the street, which the sun never gladdened, and looked as if a perpetual cloud overshadowed it.

Whether the pervading gloom was within or without one could scarcely tell. The street was narrow, and the side pavement exceedingly so; yet the old house thrust upon it two ancient bow-windows, with casements painted black, and small dark panes, through which a passer-by with good sight might decipher the titles of long rows of books, the bindings and lettering of which were faded by damp rather than by excess of light. The books were dry, judged by modern taste. They were certainly old, and mostly theological, with here and there a lighter volume of religious biography. Latin and Greek classics might have been found among them.

Between these two ancient windows was a door, always closed, but which rang a bell as it opened; and the black lintel above it bore, in dim and tarnished letters, the words "John Morley, Bookseller." Within, the shop was always dusky, partly because of the books filling the windows, and partly because of its northern frontage: a cool and pleasant shade in summer, but in winter a very den of chill and darkness. As you opened the heavy door, and entered the shop to the tinkle of a noisy bell, John Morley himself would step down into it from some apartment beyond, and meet you face to face. It was less like addressing a tradesman behind his counter, than the meeting of friends or acquaintances. Most of his customers shook hands with him.

At the first glance it would have been said that

John Morley was a grave and bookish man; at the second, that he was solemn; at the third, that he was sorrow-stricken. Some souls have a vast capacity for sorrow, and drink it in as a parched land drinks in water. There was no glimmer of sunshine about him, any more than about his dwelling. Like it, he was stationed on the northern side of life, where no laughter or splendour of sunlight could fall upon him. Involuntarily, every voice was lowered to a subdued and respectful tone. Not a sound from the rest of the premises penetrated to the dusky and quiet shop; and when John Morley bowed out his customer, and closed the door as upon some departing guest, the little bell rang loudly, like one jingling to the hard pull of a schoolboy, in an empty house.

The rest of the dwelling consisted of a number of half-furnished rooms, with steps down or steps up into them, as the fashion is in old buildings; with low, long casements, high and narrow doors, stained ceilings and half-wainscoted walls.

The windows at the back looked upon an enclosed yard, part of which had, a long time ago, been planted as a garden. A few melancholy lilacs and thin privet bushes still sucked a feeble life out of the sooty mould, and sent up slender black branches and a handful of pale leaves, to catch any stray sunbeams which might shine over the surrounding walls.

There was a long rambling range of outbuildings, including a stable filled to the rafters with rubbish; above which was a small room with a shelving roof, which was approached by an outside staircase: a sad and sombre little room, with dingy ivy-leaves growing round the door, and tapping at the dusty panes of its lattice window, as if in parody of ivied doors and windows in the country. This room—nobody knew why—bore the name of the nursery, though no children, within the memory of man, had ever played in it.

About a mile from Little Aston stood Aston Court, a handsome, bran-new, desirable family mansion, with pleasure-grounds, conservatories, and gardens, all surrounded by a fine, well-timbered park. The old Court had been bought and pulled down ten years ago by David Waldron, Esq., M.P., a famous man among the dissenters, and naturally the great man of the chapel at the end of Chapel Street. The portico had been built in honour of him.

The church at Little Aston—by which we mean that "congregation of faithful men" worshipping in the dissenters' chapel—had been small and of no repute before the advent of Mr. Waldron. It had been looked upon as low and vulgar, fitted only for the poorer classes. There had been but one member of any standing, of any education or learning, belonging to it—a man who had the "original tongues" on his lips more aptly than the

rector himself, and who knew the whole origin, motive, and history of dissent.

That man was John Morley.

If these two, David Waldron, M.P., and John Morley, bookseller, had met each other in the aisles of the parish church, they would have kept to their own legitimate spheres, and been no more to one another than the squire and his tradesman. But they were brought together on the democratic platform of a church-fellowship, in which all the members were professedly equal. They called themselves brethren.

All the rest of the brethren of Little Aston were content to look up to Mr. Waldron from a long way off, as a brother far above them; and they were quite willing that he who helped to rule the nation should rule their church absolutely. But John Morley was a deacon, like Mr. Waldron; he was also a trustee, like Mr. Waldron. He knew what equality and fraternity meant. If Mr. Waldron had political influence, John Morley had literary influence, for he could use his pen well in defence of their sect and its tenets.

These two men held a somewhat uneasy position with regard to one another. John Morley was the Mordecai in the gate; but let it be understood that Mr. Waldron was a very worthy Haman, a really good man, only a little jealous of the homage and authority he believed to be his due.

CHAPTER THE SECOND. A YOUNG STEP-MOTHER.

THE room behind John Morley's shop was spacious enough; but it had a low ceiling crossed by a massive beam, and it was lighted only by a long low casement of small panes and thick woodwork, opening upon the mournful garden at the back. It looked like an addition to the crowded shop in front; for the walls were lined with shelves closely packed with books, dull and dark in their bindings, with narrow strips of crimson baize, which had long lost their bright tint, nailed along the edge of each shelf. The furniture was heavy and old; the carpet threadbare and faded. No curtains shut out the black night when it pressed against the window outside.

On the heavy dark-wood table, during the day-time, there usually lay a pile of business books, a ledger, a day-book, which no neat, meddling hand of woman moved from time to time. No woman's work lay side by side with them, neither sewing nor knitting—such as had once, for a brief space of two years, sometimes ruffled John Morley a little by its disorder and interference with his own more important occupations. He had remembered them often, when they could come in his way no more, with a pang too sharp to be shown by any other sign than the deepening shadow under

his eyes, and the threads of white growing plainer in his dark hair.

In this same room, haunted by old memories daily becoming more and more dream-like, John Morley had spent his evenings alone, without companions, and wishing for none; having his books and his remembrances only; the latter dying away softly and slowly, as if they had merely lingered for awhile out of pure good-nature, before leaving him to his solitude.

This room was not, however, yet solitary at six o'clock one winter's evening, though John Morley was occupied with a customer in his shop. It was unlighted, except by a good fire burning brightly in the grate. Stretched at full length upon the hearth lay a little girl, reading by the fire-light, her face glowing partly with the heat, and partly with the interest excited by her book. Her hair, cut short over the forehead, had been flaxen, then golden, and was now taking a sunny chestnut shade of brown. The eyes were large, well opened, and clear, with that peculiar gaze of wonder and innocence which some children's eyes still retain at the age of ten years. In spite of the glow upon the face, it was grave and sad—as sad as a child's face can be.

You might perhaps have seen, looking at her closely, and reading rightly the expression of the eyes and mouth with its sweet and pliant lips, that this was a child whose life would be most completely shaped and coloured by the temperaments of those around her. She could never be childishly gay whilst others were suffering, nor grave in the presence of mirth. By a more direct necessity of her nature than most others possess, she would weep with those that weep and rejoice with those that rejoice. Only encircle her with gladness, and she would be the most joyous among the happy; here she was the most subdued among her mournful and sad surroundings.

This child caught at last the sound of animated voices, and lifted up her head which had been bent over her book. A minute or two afterwards she crossed the room quietly to the door which connected it with the shop, and pushed it open far enough to get a glimpse of the talkers. She could see her father's face, and she leaned forward more eagerly to look at it. She could hardly remember to have seen it without its profound and unbroken gloom, which never lightened when looking at her. But now the gloom was gone; the dark eyes glittered, the stern lips smiled, and the heavy eyebrows expanded with an unmistakable pleasure, as he gazed into the face turned towards him. This face the child could not see. The little solitary heart was as quickly troubled as the surface of a mountain tarn, which lies open to every breath that blows; and the tears came, she did not know why, into her eyes.

"Come in and see my little girl now," said John Morley, in a tone which reached her ears.

The child shrank back shyly, and retreated to the hearth, reaching it just in time to turn, and front the stranger, who seemed to hesitate for a moment on the threshold of the comfortless and sombre room. The face was girlish and exceedingly pretty, set round with rich masses of fair hair, and lit up with blue eyes, which appeared to shine into the gloom and disperse it. Her hesitation, if it were hesitation, was gone in an instant, and she crossed the floor with a light and eager step to the child, who waited timidly her approach. She laid her arm about her shoulders, and stooped down to kiss her cheek.

"What is your name, my dear?" she asked, in a gay young voice, which seemed to thrill through the child's sensitive frame.

"Hester Morley," she answered, speaking with quaint self-possession, and in measured tones: "what is your name, and where do you come from?"

"My name is Rose Mary," said the stranger, with a laugh breaking through the long dull silence of the place, with a promise of more music like it: "is it a pretty name, Hester?"

"I think so," replied the child after a moment's musing; "does my father like it?"

"Oh, you droll little creature!" exclaimed the girl, with a sidelong glance at John Morley's radiant face. "I dare say he does, but I shan't ask him. How old are you, Hester?"

"I am nine years old," she said, sighing as if she had found the nine years a heavy burden; "but you are older than I. How old are you, Rose Mary?"

"Oh, fie!" she cried, lowering her voice to a mock whisper, "you must never ask a lady her age; that is always a secret. But I will tell you; only you must never, never tell your papa. I am twenty-three years old; positively an old woman. What an odd little mortal you are!"

The girl's manner had a light and graceful vivacity about it, full of charm and novelty to both of her grave listeners. She glanced again at John Morley with an expression which the child could not altogether comprehend, but which caused her to withdraw her hand from hers. John Morley came forward to the hearth, and laid his hand upon his little daughter's head.

"She has been sadly neglected," he said, looking fondly at the pretty girl beside him; "but you will soon put her right.—Hester, this lady has promised to be your mother."

Hester neither spoke nor moved, except that her clear eyes went quickly from the one face to the other, but dwelt longest on the sombre yet handsome features most familiar to her.

"Don't you understand, my little Hester?" asked

Rose, putting her hand through John Morley's arm, with a coquettish and caressing gesture. "I am going to be your mamma, and take care of you."

"Yes, I understand," said the child, nodding her head, "you are going to be my step-mother. I have read all about it in books, and Lawson has told me about it. My real mother is dead; and my father is going to marry you. Yes, I know all about it. At first the step-mother is very kind, and is very fond of the children; but as soon as she has a baby of her own, she gets cross with the others, and everything is quite different."

John Morley's face flushed and darkened while his little daughter spoke in her measured tones; but Rose laughed her blithe and musical laugh again, and fell down on her knees before Hester so as to bring her bright face on a level with the child's serious eyes.

"Look at me, little Hetty!" she cried, "just look at me. Do I look as if I could ever be cross or unkind? I'm not an old dragon of a step-mother. I shall want somebody to play with me, and your papa is years and years too old to play; but you and I will have fine games together. Oh! I am sure you will love me."

Hester gazed into the blue eyes of the girl with the deep, full, unconscious scrutiny of a child. The colour came and went upon Rose's cheeks, and her lips pouted under this inspection. At last Hester half held out her small hand to her future step-mother, but checked herself, looking up to her father.

"Will it make you happy?" she asked, with a grave air.

"Happier than I could tell you," answered John Morley passionately.

"I like you," she said, turning to Rose, "and we shall all be very happy—at first."

"No! no! no! Not at first, but always," cried the girl, pressing kiss after kiss upon Hester's mouth "we will love one another very dearly. You will be very glad to have me for your mamma?"

"Yes," answered Hester, still regarding her wistfully.

"And you promise me to be like my own daughter," continued Rose half playfully, "forever and ever? You will love, honour, and succour me—those are the words, I think—as if I were your mother? When I am old and ugly, and nobody cares for me, you will care for me, and never forsake me? Let me whisper a little secret, Hester. Your father will grow tired of me by-and-by, and we shall quarrel sometimes, and he will be very angry and dreadfully cross—oh, so cross! But you must never get tired or cross with me. You must try to be exactly, just exactly the same as if you were born my own little girl. Will you promise me this, Hetty?"

She had spoken quite as much to John Morley

as to Hester, with little coquettish charms and prettinesses which infatuated him. Hester's small, serious countenance deepened with thought, as she deliberated for a minute or two, gazing into her father's beaming face.

"Ought I to promise, father?" she asked at last.

"Certainly," answered John Morley; "she is to be your mother. You cannot be too good a child to her."

"God hears me promise," said the little girl, with simple solemnity; "I promise that I will be the same as if I had been born your daughter. I do promise it."

The gloomy room was silent again as Hester's childish voice ceased speaking; and the girl, who still knelt before her, grew pale, and the tears sprang into her eyes. John Morley also felt a passing chill and shadow of doubt crossing the brightness of his new joy. It was a gloomy niche in a gloomy household, which he was about to fill up with this gay and girlish creature. She glanced round the room with its dingy rows of books, and peeped up into John Morley's face, already marked with austere lines; and an involuntary shudder ran through her. But the next moment she laughed merrily. She embraced Hester with warmth, and held out her hand for John Morley to assist her in rising from her knees. It was one of her charming ways to seem to require help upon the slightest occasions.

"Thank you," she said, giving him a smile which made his heart beat quickly again with delight. "This is a queer child! She made me feel, I can't tell you how solemn! It was almost like being married, and hearing you vow all you will have to vow, you know. Are you quite sure you will be as much in earnest?"

John Morley murmured a reply which could not reach Hester's ears.

"Well, I must go now," she said. "I ought to be back already at that wretched school. Oh! I am tired to death of it; I long to get away from it. I believe I am only marrying you to be sure of never going back to it. There, now! It is such a shame for a pretty girl like me—and I am a pretty girl, you know—to be chained to a long table, hearing stupid dots repeat stupid lessons. You will save my life, sir, and I thank you a thousand times for it."

She curtsied to him playfully, kissed Hester, and tripped away lightly out of the dark room, which seemed darker than ever after she had left it.

CHAPTER THE THIRD.
PASTOR AND DEACONS.

WHEN John Morley returned to the sitting-room, he busied himself for some minutes in lighting the lamp, and setting everything into unbroken order,

without once venturing to meet the eyes of his little girl, who still kept her station upon the hearth, watching him timidly but steadily. There was an undefined shyness and disquietude in his feelings towards her, which he could not well have explained to himself. He was accustomed to perform these small feminine duties of setting his room in order, but to-night he found himself embarrassed and awkward, with Hester's eyes upon him. After completing his methodical arrangements, he reached down a thick old volume from the book-shelves, and appeared to absorb himself in its contents.

But he was not reading. Hester was not to be deceived by the transparent artifice; and he felt it uneasily, and moved restlessly in his arm-chair, shading his eyes with his thin and scholarly hand. But all his features were kindled with a sunshine from within, brighter and stronger than a smile; for he would not smile, though he could not dim the light in his eyes, or make harsh again the strange softness which was smoothing away the rigid lines upon his face. Hester comprehended, but vaguely and as a child only, that a sad life, solitary and unnatural, was coming to an end, and that already the light shone upon him from afar off. Her young heart was full of sympathy for him; but for some time she kept silence. Her short life had been full of lessons of reserve and taciturnity.

"Father," she said after a long while—and he put down his hand, and looked across to her, where she sat in a large, deep, old arm-chair which had always been her mother's seat—"I'm not at all sorry to have a step-mother."

The child's approbation had something quaint about it, but its oddity did not seem to strike her father, though he allowed a vivid smile to flit across his face as he heard it.

"Will it be long before you are tired of my step-mother?" inquired Hester.

"I shall never be tired of her," he answered.

"But you are tired of me," she continued, "and you are tired of my mother, or else you would not want to marry another wife. So I thought you would get tired of Rose Mary some day."

"Hester," said John Morley, his face over-clouded again, "I should never have been tired of your mother if she had lived."

"But you tell me she does live," persisted the child, "and Lawson says she comes back sometimes, and walks about the house; though I cannot see her. Sometimes I think I can feel her kissing me very softly. Perhaps she is here this evening, and heard me promise to be like a daughter to my step-mother. Do you think she would like it, father?"

It was seldom that Hester spoke so freely and fluently; but this evening she was excited, her cheeks were crimson, and her large grey eyes were lit up. John Morley lowered his voice, and looked stealthily round the room as he answered her.

"My love, if your poor mother, who was very dear to me, dearer than you can think, could know of this, I am sure she would rejoice for your sake as well as mine. I am doing what I believe to be good for you as well as for myself. You need some woman to stand in a close relationship to you; and you will need it more as you grow older. Rose will be a second mother to you."

"You are quite sure?" said Hester, with a childish love of reiterated and positive assurance.

"Quite sure," he answered.

Perhaps he had had but little thought of his child till this evening, but now he began to believe that she had been his chief consideration; and as he turned back to his book, he said to himself several times, "Certainly Rose will be a second mother to her."

The silence which followed seemed scarcely like a silence to him, while the eager face of Hester was bent forward out of her great arm-chair, and her speaking eyes were fastened upon him. But he would give no attention to her eloquent looks, and in a few minutes she seemed aware of this, for she nestled down into her mother's chair, as she might have nestled into her mother's lap, and produced a book which she had kept wrapped up in her pinafore since the first interruption of her evening's reading. John Morley and his daughter sat thus for half an hour, no sound reaching them from without—when the sharp tinkle of the shop-bell broke upon the stillness.

The persons who entered were two men, one old, the other elderly; unlike in feature, yet possessing an undefinable and subtle resemblance, which linked them together, and seemed also to link them to

John Morley. It might have been that the order of their thoughts, and the convictions and conclusions at which they had arrived, had been the same, for the brain works out its own family likenesses. It was evident that in some way or other they belonged to one class; though John Morley, a handsomer man than either of the others, had also most the look of a scholar. The smallest, meekest, and eldest of the three men was distinguished as a minister by his dress, and the spotless whiteness of a large neckcloth, which served to withdraw the eye from dwelling upon his somewhat feeble features. The third was a robust, thick-set, elderly man, with a square and massive face, and with the air of one not much accustomed to be gainsaid, yet who would not altogether dislike to meet with a worthy antagonist.

"Brother Morley, we come as friends," said the minister.

With a courteous but formal bow, John Morley ushered his guests into his sitting-room, and set chairs for them at the table, as if they were about to sit in committee. The minister alone took any notice of Hester, who slipped down from her high seat upon their entrance, to offer them a shy welcome. She was used to listen earnestly to the discussions and controversies often held in her father's parlour.

This evening, however, there was some difficulty in introducing the subject of conversation, and when the minister broke silence it was in a faltering, apologetic voice.

"Brother Morley," he said, "cannot you divine the purport of our visit to-night?"

END OF CHAPTER THE THIRD.

MODERN GREECE.

BY PROFESSOR D. T. ANSTED, M.A., F.R.S., ETC.

IN THREE PARTS.—PART THE FIRST.



LESS than forty years ago, the town of Athens, as it then existed, is thus described by Dr. Wordsworth (the present Bishop of Lincoln), in a work well known, and written after a long and thorough investigation of the Greece of that day, from which the Turks had been only partly and very recently expelled:—

"The Bazar or market at Athens is a long street, which is now the only one there of any importance. It has no foot pavement, and there is a gutter in the middle, down which in wintry weather the water runs in copious torrents. The houses are generally patched together with planks and plaster. . . .

Here are no books, no lamps, no windows, no carriages, no newspapers, no post-office. The letters which arrived here a few days since from Napoli (Nauplia), after having been publicly cried in the streets, if they were not claimed by the parties to whom they were addressed, were committed to the flames. A few Turks doze in the archways of the Acropolis, or recline while smoking their pipes and leaning with their backs against the rusty cannon which are planted on the battlements of its walls; and the Athenian peasant, as he drives his laden mule from Hymettus through the eastern gate of the town, flings a small bundle of thyme and brushwood from the load which he brings on his mule's back, as a tribute to the Mussulman toll-gatherer."

Such was Athens in 1833, so far as the town was

concerned. Let us next judge of the state of the country from the same trustworthy source :—"On setting out this morning from the Gate of Athens, in our way to the Piræus" (a distance of three miles, now traversed by a railway, with trains every hour each way), "we were cautioned to delay our steps till we had formed a strong party to go with us. A few days ago, two Greeks coming from the Piræus in the evening were plundered and wounded on this road. . . . The delineation of a chart of Athens and its suburbs was lately commenced by two architects residing in the town. They were desirous of completing it as expeditiously as possible. Instead, however, of being accomplished, their task has just been abandoned, on account of the insecurity with which they found that even within sight of the walls of Athens their researches were attended."

It was under such auspices that the Kingdom of Greece was founded, and unfortunately, although on the part of the king and queen there appears to have been every effort made to adapt themselves to their new country, the court was surrounded and eaten up by that German intrigue which has too long and too often produced an antipathy between the governors and the governed. Greece was not from the first happily organised. The constitution was far too liberal, and based on a suffrage which gave a vastly predominant influence to ignorance and prejudice. The Chamber of Deputies, intended to be a truly representative body, represents everything but intelligence and respectability. Party spirit arose, and parties were formed, but the spirit of party was strictly limited to what it could tear from a poor and distracted country. The love of place arose and conquered everything. Place meant money to be received for little or no real honest work, and influence to be exercised in favour of relations, friends, and dependents, with no reference to the good of the country. Thus the poor country, left by the Turks in the most hopeless ignorance and disorder, had to grope in the dark for a way out of the labyrinth of difficulties in which it was entangled, and Europe sat quietly looking on, like the owl in the Parthenon, gloating over miseries it might easily have foreseen, and foreseeing, might have prevented.

For what did the population of Greece then consist of? The Klephts were the noblest of all, for they had fought honestly the battles of their country, and they could hardly be expected to change their habits at a moment's notice. They were no doubt robbers in the ordinary sense of the word, but they were so when robbery was the only form of patriotism. Besides the Klephts, who had fought long and bravely against the public enemy, and had learnt to look on everything they could lay hands on as their own, there were numerous victims of Turkish insolence who had bowed to despotism, as

being a condition not to be resisted. Some of them could lift up their heads as honest men when the storm of despotism had passed over the country, and had left the dawning light of liberty, but these were few; despotism and slavery are not ennobling or invigorating influences. They may induce hypocrisy, but they hardly encourage virtue, either public or private. Thus many of these had lost their moral sense. Many patriotic men had no doubt left the country, hopeless of resisting. Others had retired altogether into private life. The morals of the nation were thus seriously injured, and nothing but the elasticity that is the characteristic of great vital energy remaining in a people, could have enabled the Greeks as a nation to do what they have really done in recovering themselves. Still the national character had suffered, and was seriously depreciated. It has not altogether recovered its tone.

It must be borne in mind that all these events and the emancipation of Greece took place less than forty years ago. The part of the population now middle-aged and old were, when young, either slaves or robbers. There was no alternative. Every man now in the prime of life was either born of parents whose whole life had been spent under the Turkish yoke, or at best within a few years of the first introduction of freedom. New institutions take some time to consolidate, and the parents of the present generation of grown men could hardly have benefited much by the change. Education had to be introduced, and it took some time to get a footing. Teachers had to be found, and a system had to grow up. Even books had to be supplied. No doubt this was done, and rapidly done; but it is only the younger men, those now coming into active life, and the children, who are still too young to have any influence, who can be regarded as belonging entirely to the present order of things.

Surely it is unfair to expect from a people thus circumstanced the conditions only found imperfectly even in countries long settled, and having for centuries enjoyed similar advantages. The real excuse for brigandage, and for that insecurity of property and life so much complained of, is that the habits of the Middle Ages are in Greece brought into direct contact with those of modern civilisation. The Klepht, or brigand if you like it better, is the real modern representation of the robber-knight, and just as these old robber-knights relieved the travellers and merchants on the Rhine, the Danube, and elsewhere of all available property, and in case of need retained their persons for ransoms, or murdered them when convenient, so did and do the few members of the class left alive in Greece interfere with the comforts and safety of tourists and merchants at present. But it is quite a mistake to suppose that the whole population is a population of robbers, or that with this exception there is more

danger to life or risk of loss of property from the peasants, the cultivators of land, or the shepherds of any part of Greece than of any other country in Europe.

Brigandage is an ancient institution, with its heroes and traditions, and it does not degrade those who adopt it as a livelihood. But by degrees, as it becomes more difficult to follow as a profession, and the state of society no longer admits of it, the last of the brigands becomes reckless in proportion as he sees his chances of retreat cut off. Thus it is that even now the country, at some few miles only from the capital—the most attractive point and, owing to its natural features, the best adapted for such operations—is regarded as unsafe, and the favourite trip from Athens to Marathon must be abandoned, not because it is known that brigands are near, but because no one knows where the few hands still remaining lie concealed, what is their strength, or how they obtain the information upon which they act. The real number of attacks made is exceedingly small, but who can say, when wishing to make a journey through Attica, whether he may not be the victim?

It is, however, not the case that Greece is generally unsafe. Through the length and breadth of the Morea brigandage is unknown. There is none in any of the islands which, as is well known, form so large and important a part of the country. Eubœa is quiet and cultivated. Ægina is quiet and almost deserted. Salamis is safe. In the Ionian Islands there never has been danger. The whole group of the Cyclades may be visited without other difficulty than the want of accommodation in some of them. The population is rapidly and steadily increasing, and there are indications of an increase of wealth, that it is impossible even for the most superficial or the most prejudiced traveller not to see.*

Let me endeavour to point out some of these indications to the general reader, who perhaps (as I have heard remarked by a lady who could not get postage stamps at the post-office so quickly as she desired) considers the modern Greeks as "barbarians," and expects to find at the most some superficial civilisation in Athens, due to the Germans who for some time honoured it with their attention as a residence, in the time of King Otho.

By all means let honour be given to whom honour is due, and let it be known that the laying out of the plan of the new city of Athens, and the designing of the palace and some other buildings, besides some of the money expended in carrying them into execution, has come from private resources not in any sense Greek.

The traveller who arrives in Greece generally lands at the Piræus. On the shores of this beautiful and classic harbour a new and large town has sprung up within the last fifteen years, remarkable much more for the number of tall chimneys it presents to view than for any remains of ancient or mediæval art, of which indeed there is no indication. Numerous flourishing manufactories carried on by the aid of steam are now in profitable work. These include cotton mills, silk mills, iron foundries, furniture manufactures in wood and iron, and corn mills.

There is a well-constructed quay solidly built of stone round a large part of the harbour. A very considerable trade is carried on here by means of steamers, home as well as foreign, and there are regular services, one from the Piræus to Syra, another to the head of the Gulf of Ægina, connecting on the other side of the Isthmus of Corinth with a regular bi-weekly service to Patras, and thence to all the Ionian Islands, and a third to the principal ports of the Morea. The harbour is always well filled with shipping, and, extensive as the quays are, there is hardly room for more ships than are moored along it.

On landing at the Piræus, the traveller finds carriages waiting his convenience, or if he prefers it, there is a railway to Athens, with a departure every hour during the day. The railway is an English speculation, and is a decided and great success, though very extravagantly constructed. It is well appointed, and the carriages are comfortable.

The distance is about three English miles, and the number of passengers averages nearly 2,000 per day throughout the year. It should not be forgotten that the Piræus boasts of an excellent bathing establishment, which is very flourishing, and in the coming season there will be a good French dramatic company for the amusement of the visitors.

The country crossed on the road from the Piræus to Athens is the renowned plains of Attica. These are now cultivated in every part, watered by the classical streams of the Ilissus and Cephissus, and produce vast quantities of oil and of wine, so good that, when not flavoured by resin (more appreciated by Greeks than by strangers), it is as delicious as any table wine I have drunk. It is slightly sweet, and may not please all tastes, but at any rate it is sound, free from acidity, and of sufficient body to prevent any cause of complaint. It has also the advantage of being cheap. Oranges, figs, peaches, and other fruit, besides much garden produce, are obtained for the use of the city; but the early vegetables in the Athens market are procured from Syra, one of the Cyclades, which I shall speak of presently.

* The population of Greece, estimated at less than 700,000 in 1833, is now a million and a quarter. The Ionian Islands (since added) number 200,000.



"THAT STRECK O' FOAM."

THE LIFEBOAT-MAN.

AY, ay, sir, 'twill be a squally night ;
 There's a screechin' now and then
 That bodes hard times for the craft afloat,
 And harder for the men.

Just turn your glass more to windward, sir,
 Keep a look-out thereaway ;
 D'you see that little line o' white
 A-steerin' for the bay ?

There's never a seaman hereabout,
 When he sights that streck o' foam,
 But turns his 'bacco and sets his teeth,
 And thinks a bit of home !

Wrecked ? Ay, ay, sir, I'd once a close shave-
 A tussle for life, maybe ;
 But the Lord, He knows His own good will,
 And stretched His hand to me !

Well, sir, 'twas this way—Two years ago
I was only a coaster's hand ;
Our craft she warn't much more nor a hoy—
Her name the *Thomas Brand*.

We were bound, sir, for the Cornish coast,
With a cargo rather light ;
I've been in many a squall since then,
But never such a night.

Can I describe it ? Well, no, I can't,
For my head was all awlirl ;
'Twas wind and water, and sea and sky,
All of a rush and skirl !

There was little time for a man to think,
With death around and below ;
But all comes back in a heap as 'twere,
At least I found it so.

I thought, as I hugged the leeward chains,
Of my poor old mother's pain,
And how she prayed for my safe return,
"Lord ! send him back again."

Our skipper did all that man could do,
But the wind was dead ashore,
And the big black rocks were like a wall
Nearin' us more and more.

We tried the sails, but every stitch
Was shivered as soon as set ;
"Let go the anchors," and over they went,
The one chance left us yet !

No hemp or iron could stand that strain,
And our hawsers snapped like thread ;
"Good-bye, my lads, for our time has come,
No help save overhead."

No help, indeed, for up we all went,
And down with a crash and din,
Broadside on, to the rocks a-lec,
That stove our port side in.

'Twas all over now, we broke up fast ;
A few minutes more of breath—
But the prayer was heard : a rocket passed
Over that bed of death !

'Twas the lifeboat-men had sent a line,
A straw for poor drowning men,
And just in time, for a minute more
Had been too late—and then—?

A fight ? Ay, ay, 'twas a fight for life,
But the Lord, He helped me through.
Thankful ? Yes, yes, I was, and now
I'm one of that life-boat's crew.

THE PLANET JUPITER.

BY RICHARD A. PROCTOR, B.A. (CAMBRIDGE), HONORARY SECRETARY OF THE ROYAL ASTRONOMICAL SOCIETY.



THE planet Jupiter, which is now the chief luminary of the night, holds a very distinguished position in the solar system. The planetary scheme is so commonly depicted as a system of concentric circles, in which, so far as appearances are concerned, no planet bears special sway, that many are surprised when they learn that Jupiter is larger and more massive than all the other planets together. Saturn may be called a brother-giant when he is compared with the rest of the planets ; but considering Jupiter and Saturn apart from the rest, and comparing them with each other, Saturn appears as a dwarf. Jupiter has nearly twice the volume of Saturn, and more than three times his mass.

But it is when we pass to the other members of the solar family that we see how unequal the planets are in bulk. For Saturn surpasses the next in order—distant Neptune—more than six times in

volume, and nearly six times in mass ; Uranus he surpasses nine times in volume, and seven times in mass ; and as for the other planets—this earth on which we live, the brilliant Venus, ruddy Mars, and sparkling Mercury—when we take them all together, we find they are exceeded more than thirty-five-fold in volume, and more than six-fold in mass, by Uranus, the least of the four major planets.

Considering the mass of the different planets as the element which mainly determines their importance, Jupiter stands thus in advance of all the rest :—Taking the earth's mass as unity, the four minor planets together have a mass just exceeding 2 ; Saturn's mass is 90, Neptune's 17, that of Uranus 13 ; so that, in all, these seven planets have a mass represented by the number 122. Now the mass of Jupiter is 301, or very nearly 2½ times as great as that of all the other planets taken together.

Such is the mass of the mighty giant now shining so conspicuously in the southern skies during the mid-hours of the night. And when we speak of mass, we speak in reality of might. The power of the giant Jupiter depends, not on his bulk, but on the quantity of matter he contains. Many a comet

has occupied a far larger space than Jupiter, yet the largest comet would be utterly powerless beside the planet. In whatever way it comes to pass, the attractive energy of each body in the universe depends on the quantity of matter contained in it. In this respect, therefore, Jupiter far outvies all his fellow-planets. What Homer makes Zeus say to the gods and goddesses on Olympus (*Iliad*, viii. 18-26) might be said by Jupiter to the other planets, if there were "speech and language" among the planets, "and their voices were heard among them." If they all pulled together at the chain of attraction—in other words, if they could be all "in opposition" together,* he would, by his mighty influence, be able to exert an influence surpassing in energy their combined action.

There is another striking way of considering the superior bulk of Jupiter. The sun exceeds the earth 1,250,000 times in volume, insomuch that the earth must be regarded as a mere atom in creation by comparison with the sun. Now the sun exceeds Jupiter enormously in volume, yet not so enormously but that Jupiter's volume is larger compared with the earth's than is the sun's compared with Jupiter's. In fact, Jupiter is about 1,230 times larger than the earth, while the sun is but about 1,020 times larger than Jupiter.

Does it not seem reasonable to suppose that Jupiter is an orb altogether unlike our earth and her fellow-planets forming the inner portion of the solar family? He would appear to belong to another order of created things. It seems improbable that so great a disparity should exist between bodies of the same order, and fulfilling the same purposes in the scheme of creation. When we compare Venus and the earth with Mars and Mercury, we find certainly a considerable disproportion, both as respects bulk and mass, but the difference is quite insignificant compared with that which distinguishes Jupiter from Venus or the earth.

When we inquire further, we find the opinion strengthened that Jupiter is an orb of another order. All the minor planets, or, as they have been called, the terrestrial planets, travel comparatively close by the sun. They seem placed as it were under his special protection. And in fact this is no idle fancy, for if they were much farther away they would be seriously disturbed in their movements by the attraction of Jupiter. But when we pass from the path of Mars, the outermost of the terrestrial planets, to that of Jupiter, we have not to pass over a space which is merely large in absolute extent,

but we find here a wide gulf compared with which the spaces separating the orbits of the smaller planets seem insignificant.

These spaces are not very unequal.

Thus, measuring from the sun to Mercury's orbit the distance amounts in round numbers to 35 millions of miles; from Mercury's orbit to Venus's, 31 millions; from Venus's to the earth's, 25 millions; from the earth's to Mars', 48 millions—the mean of these distances being 35 millions of miles. But from the orbit of Mars to that of Jupiter the distance amounts to 336 millions of miles, nearly ten times as great as the mean distance just mentioned, and exceeding by 58 millions of miles the whole diameter of the space within which the terrestrial planets travel.

It is true the interval between the paths of Mars and Jupiter is not unoccupied. It is here that those small planets travel, which were once supposed to be the fragments of a single body, that had burst like a mighty celestial "shell." One hundred and twenty-nine of these bodies have been discovered, and "the cry is still, They come." But the contrast between Jupiter and the terrestrial planets is not rendered less striking by this circumstance. If we regard the small planets, or asteroids, as forming the outskirts of the terrestrial system, we are struck by the strangeness of the circumstance that immediately beyond the region where these tiniest members of the solar family are travelling, there comes the orbit of a planet representing nearly five-sevenths of the whole mass of the planetary system.

But the giant Jupiter is contrasted in yet other ways with the terrestrial family of planets. The mean density of his substance is about one-fourth that of the earth's substance. In this respect he resembles the sun. Now, it by no means follows, as some have supposed, that Jupiter is a globe composed of matter having a density not much greater than that of water. The solid globe of the planet may be very much smaller than the orb we measure, because it may well be that the planet has an atmosphere of enormous depth, laden with clouds reaching to a vast height, and in that case it is the boundary of the cloud-envelope, *not* the outline of the solid globe, which astronomers measure. In fact not only is this possible, but this is the idea suggested by the appearance of the planet. Everything we see with the telescope gives the impression that we are looking at a cloud-sphere, far within which lies the solid nucleus of the planet. But then this inference shows of itself that we have to deal with a planet utterly unlike our earth and her fellow-planets.

If we suppose the atmosphere of our own planet, the earth, to be visible at all from the other planets, it yet can scarcely add appreciably to the seeming size of the earth. An astronomer on Venus, when

* This technical expression has not here its usual meaning. It usually relates to the sun, which is left out of consideration in the above statement. What is meant is that if all the planets were in the same line, Jupiter being at one end, his greater bulk on them would cause their common centre of gravity to move more quickly towards his than his towards theirs.

measuring the earth's disc, might in reality take his measurement from a cloud-layer on the eastern side of her disc to one on the western side. But if we set such cloud-layers even at the height of ten miles from her surface (a most exaggerated estimate), yet her seeming diameter would only be increased by about *one* four-hundredth part, and the estimate of her density would be reduced by about *three* four-hundredth parts. This is quite insignificant.

But now suppose that the great planet Jupiter has a solid (or liquid) globe of the same mean density as the earth, and let us inquire how much he must be enlarged in appearance by his cloud-laden atmosphere, to cause him to appear as large as he actually does. In round numbers he looks four times as large (in bulk) as a globe of equal mass but as dense as the earth. It is hence readily shown that his seeming diameter is greater than it would be in the latter case, almost exactly in the same degree as 8 is greater than 5.* Now his mean diameter is about 84,000 miles; so that, on the supposition we are dealing with, the diameter of his solid nucleus should be 52,500 miles (rather less if we take into account the circumstance that his cloud-laden atmosphere would necessarily have some mass).

It follows, therefore, that the great cloud-sphere which astronomers measure must be 15,750 miles deep, if Jupiter's solid or liquid nucleus has the same mean density that our earth's globe has.

An atmosphere of this depth is marvellous to think of, even from mere quantity, but it is yet more marvellous when we consider the condition in which it must exist. Our atmosphere is drawn earthwards, and accordingly it is more and more compressed as the earth's surface is approached. At a height of $3\frac{1}{2}$ miles its pressure and density are reduced to *one-half*, at a depth of $3\frac{1}{2}$ miles below the sea-level they would be doubled, at a depth of 7 miles quadrupled, and so on: always supposing that gravity at these depths remained undiminished. It would only require a depth of about 34 miles to cause the pressure to increase so much, that if the air still remained gaseous it would be as dense as water. What would be the pressure and density, then, if without any reduction of gravity the atmosphere could extend downwards to a depth of several thousand miles? Of course the air would not remain gaseous, but we set that condition aside for a moment, and we have this curious result, that the density would be many millions of times greater than that of platinum.

Now out yonder, on the great planet Jupiter, a much more tremendous increase of pressure would take place. For the weight and density of our at-

mosphere depend on the earth's attraction, or gravity. If the earth were made of lead throughout (without change of volume) the air would press more heavily on this leaden globe, and would be correspondingly increased in density at the surface of the globe. The increase would be precisely proportional to the greater density of lead as compared with the present mean density of the earth; the density of the air would in fact be almost exactly doubled.

Now on the supposition which we have already made respecting Jupiter, namely, that his solid globe has the same mean density as the earth, and that accordingly the diameter of this globe is about 52,500 miles, gravity at the surface must be very much greater than it has been calculated to be on the supposition that we see the real surface of the planet.

The text-books of astronomy tell us that gravity at Jupiter's surface is represented by $2\frac{3}{4}$ where terrestrial gravity is represented by unity; and this inference is just if the true surface of Jupiter is about 42,500 miles from his centre. *But*, if the true surface is only 26,250 miles from the centre, gravity at the surface is prodigiously increased. In fact, since the distances just mentioned are to each other as 8 to 5, and gravity increases inversely as the squares, we have gravity at the real surface (on our supposition) increased in the proportion of 64 to 25; and since it is already set at $2\frac{3}{4}$ times terrestrial gravity, we see that it actually exceeds terrestrial gravity in the proportion of about 7 times. So that a man placed on this surface would be as though burdened with a weight equal to 6 times his weight on the earth's surface. (He would actually weigh 7 times as much, and 6 times his terrestrial weight would thus be of the nature of an extra weight or burden.) Now applying this result to the question of our atmosphere, we have the following striking inferences:—

If there were only as much air above each square mile of Jupiter's surface as there is above each square mile of our earth, this air would yet be 7 times as dense at the actual surface of the planet, on account of the greater power of Jovian gravity. Moreover it would be throughout its extent compressed 7 times as much, and would therefore be a much shallower atmosphere than our own. But we have seen reason to believe that Jupiter's atmosphere is thousands of miles deep; and not only so (for after all the depth of an atmosphere is a vague relation), but that it extends thousands of miles below that region where it probably has some resemblance to our own in density. Now our air goes on increasing in density downwards, at such a rate as to double in density for every $3\frac{1}{2}$ miles of depth; and Jupiter's must necessarily double in density with a less increase of depth (in the proportion of 7 to 1), or, in fact, in half a mile.

*This makes his seeming superficial extent greater as 64 to 25, and his seeming bulk as 512 to 125, which is very nearly as 4 to 1.

Adding this consideration to what has been said above, we perceive that we arrive very quickly indeed at a density beyond that of our terrestrial liquids.

We may put the matter thus:—If terrestrial gravity were as great as that at Jupiter's real surface (on our supposition), our air would be 7 times as dense as at present, or would be about 110 times less dense than water; then if a deep mine were dug, the air at the depth of half a mile would be twice as dense as at the surface, at the depth of a mile 4 times as dense, at the depth of $1\frac{1}{2}$ mile 8 times as dense, and so on, until we arrive at a depth of $3\frac{1}{2}$ miles, when its density would be increased 128 times, or be greater than that of water. It would not remain gaseous to this depth, however, for the pressure corresponding to the increase of density mentioned would be about 950 times that of our air at the sea-level, or nearly $6\frac{1}{2}$ tons on every square inch.* But this enormous pressure is obtained at a depth of only $3\frac{1}{2}$ miles. What would be the pressure (according to the geometrical rate of increase) at a depth of thousands of miles?

It may be asked, however, whether these considerations, based as they are on a mere supposition, are worthy of the consideration here given to them. But the point to which I wish to invite special attention is this, that adopt what supposition we may as to Jupiter's condition, we arrive at results utterly incompatible with the theory that he is an orb in any sense resembling our earth, or uninhabitable by creatures resembling those with which we are familiar. The supposition I have adopted hitherto brings Jupiter thus far into resemblance with our earth as to assign him a solid globe of mean density not less than the earth's, and we see that on this supposition we arrive at the most remarkable conclusions respecting Jupiter's atmosphere. But suppose we change our hypothesis, and assign to Jupiter a solid or liquid globe of greater or less density than the earth's. If the density is greater, Jupiter's solid or liquid globe is smaller, the attraction at its surface greater, the atmosphere deeper than we have been supposing; and all the results just considered must be intensified, so to speak. If the density of Jupiter's solid or liquid globe is assumed to be less than that of our earth, we seem to see a way out of our difficulties, but it is by no means an easy way. The lowest supposition we can make must assign to Jupiter a mean density equal to one-fourth of the earth's, or greater than that of water in the por-

portion of about 11 to 8; and on the supposition that a globe very nearly as large as that we see is solid or liquid, and of the mean density just named, the difficulty arises that no known solid or liquid substance would be light enough at the surface of Jupiter to give no greater mean density to his whole globe.

Take liquid ammonia, which has a density equal to about three-fourths that of water; then if the law of compressibility recognised for the liquid be supposed uniform for all pressures, this liquid would be doubled in density at a depth of about 50 miles, quadrupled at a depth of 100 miles, or already, even at this slight depth—a mere nothing compared with Jupiter's diameter of 84,000 miles—a density exceeding the mean density of Jupiter would be attained. If the law of compression be not uniform, we nevertheless see that we are, even by this very consideration, brought into the presence of facts with which on earth we are unfamiliar.

Nor do our atmospheric difficulties disappear, for it is manifest to telescopic observation that Jupiter has an atmosphere much deeper and denser than our own. Subjected as this atmosphere must needs be to an attraction more than $2\frac{1}{2}$ times as great as terrestrial gravity (we are now dealing with the orb of Jupiter as actually seen, and are certainly within the truth), it must double in density with each mile and a half of depth, and at this rate a depth of only 15 miles below that region where it is no denser than our air at the sea-level, would give a pressure of 1,024 atmospheres. Yet, if telescopic observation is to be relied upon, the Jovian atmosphere extends certainly more than 100 miles in depth below the region of the principal Jovian cloud-belts.

Encountered thus on every side by perplexities if we assume any resemblance to exist between the condition of Jupiter and that of the earth—in this way, that resemblance in one important feature at once leads us to the most startling contrast in some other feature equally important—the natural inference, I take it, is that we have in Jupiter an orb utterly unlike our earth in all essential respects, and doubtless fulfilling altogether different purposes in the economy of nature.

But this is the very conclusion to which I had long since been led by other considerations. I have pointed out that all the physical features of Jupiter revealed by the telescope are inconsistent with the supposition that he is a world like the earth. The enormous distance from the sun at which he travels, shows that the sun supplies but a 25th part of the light and heat to Jupiter, which we receive from him; and we can only suppose the deficiency compensated by believing that the Jovian atmosphere is constituted very differently from our own.

* Nothing like this pressure has ever been experimentally applied to gases. The greatest pressure ever applied even to liquids has been about 800 atmospheres. Under a pressure of 15 atmospheres sulphuretted hydrogen is liquefied; a pressure of 36 atmospheres liquefies carbonic acid, and only 44 atmospheres are required to liquefy nitrous oxide gas.

Yet, notwithstanding the small supply of light and heat actually received (let the atmosphere be constituted as it may), we see enormous cloud-belts formed and dissipated as if under the action of tremendous processes of disturbance. We find that these cloud-belts behave as though the sun had no part in their formation or dissipation. They pass to the night-side of the planet and come back to the illuminated side unchanged in shape. Peculiarities of configuration have been observed to remain either wholly unchanged, or undergoing a systematic and continuous process of change for weeks together. Wonderful changes of colour have occurred which no solar agency seems competent to account for. The great equatorial belt, usually of a creamy white colour, has lately glowed with a red light as though dense layers of cloud were illuminated by a red-hot mass beneath; and this peculiar appearance continued from 1870, when it was first noticed, to within a few months of the present time.*

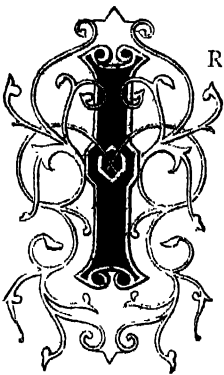
Although the planet Jupiter's position with respect to the sun has throughout this period changed very slightly indeed, a region far exceeding the whole surface of our earth has undergone this wonderful change of colour.

These and other circumstances, dealt with at length in my "Other Worlds," and "Orbs around Us," seem to me to accord ill with the conception that Jupiter is an inhabited world, or at any rate that forms of life resembling those with which we are familiar exist upon his surface. There is in his

globe, so far as we can judge, an activity resembling the activity prevailing in the solar orb, though, of course, far inferior in degree. All that we know of physical laws suggests that the main source of this activity is intense heat possessing the whole globe of the mighty planet. The fires which glow within his orb may be concealed from our ken by double and triple cloud-layers, though the recent change of colour would render it doubtful whether this is always the case. Very little of his inherent light may reach us, though it must not be forgotten that, like his brother-giant Saturn, he shines much more brightly than a globe of equal size constituted like Mars* or the moon. He may not be able to supply his satellites with any considerable amount of heat to supplement the small supply they receive from the sun, though when we remember how large a portion of the sky seen from any satellite must be occupied by Jupiter's orb when he is above the horizon, it seems highly probable that if his globe is intensely heated the satellites are sensibly warmed by him.

But whatever opinions we may now form on points such as these, respecting which real evidence is wanting, it seems as nearly demonstrated as such a matter can be, that Jupiter is not now a fit abode for living creatures such as we are acquainted with, while it is altogether probable that his globe (hidden beneath the cloud-layers we see) is the scene of processes more nearly resembling those which take place on the sun than any with which we are familiar on earth.

TIM MURNAGH.



REMEMBER as well as if it was yesterday, the time of the thrubbles in Emmett's risin', though I was but a gossoon then. We lived up near the Gap of Ballinascorney, about nine miles from Dublin, at the foot of the big mountain of Secham, and in that lonely out-of-the-way place it was not much we heard but rumours of what was going on. But one lovely summer

mornin' my father came home from the Dublin Market with a face as long as my arm.

"Musha, what ails ye at all, at all?" says my mother; "did ye ate anythin' that disagreed wid ye?" says she.

"Neither bit nor sup," says he, "has passed my lips this day. I hadn't stumich for it. I seen

what I never seen before—dead men lyin' in the streets. The boys ris last night and murdered the chief justice in Thomas Street, and there's terrible slaughter goin' on, and the boys is bet and is runnin' in all directions to the mountains, and faix, I'm afeard of my life of bein' took for one of them, though be this an' be that I'm as innocent as an angel," says he.

"Sure if you're innocent," says my mother, "and have the good conscience, what have you to fear? I'm ashamed of you, Tim Murnagh," says she—for she was a mighty sinsible woman, was my mother, and there was not a man in the whole barony but was afeard of her, and my father most of all. Oh! it id do you good to hear the talk of her when she was roused.

"Anyway you're just in time," says she, "for the mare has slipped her spanchel, an' maybe it's over

* Theoretically Mars ought to be a much brighter planet than Jupiter, when both are at their nearest. But Jupiter always shines far more brightly than Mars, as every star-gazer knows.

* The belt has now resumed its ordinary appearance.

the Gap she is now, with her neck bruk, all owin' to your divartin' yerself in Dublin instead of mindin' the stock. Oh, I know yer ways, Tim Murnagh, my man," says she.

Well, my father slinked off with himself, in a way he had when the mother discoursed him, and went to look after the mare. And he was not long gone, when a gentleman rode up to the door, an' the eyes nearly dropped out of me at the sight of him. Bedad, I thought he was no less than Bony himself; He had a lovely green uniform on him, an' a proud military look, an' I remember the pale handsome face of him an' the big dark eyes to this day.

"Will you hide a hunted man?" he said; "I am Robert Emmett, of whom you may have heard; there is a price on my head, and the dragoons are not far behind me."

"Arrah," says my mother, "I wouldn't turn a pig from the door, that kem to it with a price on its head, let alone a gentleman."

"I would not be acting fairly to you," he said, "if I did not remind you of the danger you expose yourself to in shielding me. But I am at your mercy."

"Oh, in troth, I'm not afear'd of baggonets or dragoons," says my mother; "it's the mare I'm thinkin' of—that that bosthoon Tim—but come in, sir, come in.—Here, Patsy," says she to me, "hunt the garran that the gentleman rode into the brakes. Faix, Major Sirr wouldn't find him there.—Sure, if they seen the horse, sir, it would be all up with you.—Off with you, Patsy!"

Away I went on the back of the ould pantin' horse to the waterfall in the head of the Gap, and turned him loose there, pitched the saddle and bridle in a bog-hole, an' to make more sure, put a spanchel on the horse to keep him there, and back I came wonderin' what would come of it all. Well, when I came to the boreen goin' up to the farm, I heard a clatterin' and trottin' behind me, and sure enough, there were the dragoons. I crept along the gripe till I got to my mother, and told her what I had seen.

"You're just in time," says she; "come in here. Mind," says she, "he has the typhus favour, and you are bathin' his head; there's the wet cloth."

Oh, if you seen the look of him in the bed—the white, hunted face of him, an' the long hair, an' the rowlin' eyes! In troth, it was as good a copy of a favour as ever you could see.

Well, out went the mother into the yard, and soon I heard loud talkin' and cursin' outside.

"He came this way, I tell you, woman."

"Bedad, an' if he did, he didn't stop here," says my mother, as bould as you plase. "But sure you can sarch the house, gintlemin, if ye like."

So closer came the step, and a big man in a red coat darkened the doorway.

"Oh, step aisy, step aisy, for the love of

heaven!" says my mother; "my poor boy is down with the favour. He dropped into it last week, and it's afear'd of his dyin' I am, the darlin', for his brother went with it last Lady-day, with spots on him as big as plates."

Well, I would not like to mintion the curses that kem from my bould warrior when he heard this. Anyway he didn't come in, and I heard him outside, coughin', and spittin', and blowin' his nose, and in a few minutes away the throop of them galloped. Nothin' more happened, and the evenin' came on, but not a sign of my father could be seen anywhere. For once in my life I seen my mother in a fright.

"Maybe the sojers had taken him. Maybe he had a drop, an' fell over the Gap. Maybe he couldn't find the mare, an' was' afear'd to come home. Maybe—" She was an injanious woman, and it was wonderful the thoughts that kem into her head. But at all events we sat up, the pair of us, watchin', and about one o'clock, says my mother—

"Whisht, alanna, do you hear anythin'?"

"It's the pig," says I.

"Arra," says she, "did you ever hear the pig say Biddy? It's your father—livin' or dead. I think it's in the out-house," says she. "Well, in the name of all the saints, we'll go and see."

Wid that she lit a blessed candle, and out we went into the out-house, and there in the flour-bin in the corner, there was sich pushin' and gruntin' that you'd think it was alive.

"Let me out," says a splutterin' voice, "let me out—I'm chokin'!" We lifted the lid of the bin—the hasp had caught—and out kem my father, as white as a white Ingin.

"Where's the mare?" says my mother, catchin' him by the collar.

"Oh! bedad," says my father, "if I haven't the mare, I had the night-mare anyway. Sure I kem up just as the sojers rode into the yard, and though I was as innocent, oh! as innocent as a lamb, I was afraid of a mistake and got in here, and bedad I couldn't get out again."

Anyway they made it up, and they let me stay up for some supper with themselves and Mr. Emmett that night.

Do you know I often wondered if my father was as innocent as he said he was. If he was, he wasted a deal of fright.

But to make a long story short, Mr. Emmett left us after awhile, and sorry we were to lose him: a quiet pleasant gentleman, mighty fond of poethry and sich follies, but as harmless as a chicken. Not a one of the neighbours but knew all about him and the price that was on his head; but there wasn't one of them that would sell him for all the gould in the Bank of Ireland, though they were poor enough, goodness knows. Well, one evenin', months after he

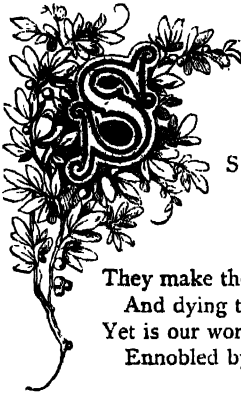
went away, my mother says to me, "Patsy, my boy, put the marc in the cart" (for we had found the mare); "we'll go to Dublin. I want to show you somethin' quare."

Off we started about one o'clock, and in the grey mornin' we were stopped at the Coombe by great crowds of people, and indeed I don't rightly remember what went on, with the noise and quareness of it all, until we kem into the middle of a great gatherin' opposite Catherine's Church. Oh! sich a sight of people I never seen, on the tops of the houses, and on stands all down Thomas Street; and sojers with drawn soords; and a great big affair in the middle of it, painted black. But the terriblest thing of all just thin was the stillness. Faix, it would frighten you to listen to it. We wern't long theré when there was a sound through

the crowd, like what you'd hear in a wood whin the wind is risin', and up got some min upon the scaffold. And there—oh, glory be to goodness!—I seen him, the pale face, the long black hair, and the big eyes of him. I hardly knew what went on, till I seen a man, with a mask on his face, holdin' up something, and cryin' out, "Behold the head of a thraitor!" And with that there kem a yell from the people that's a'most ringin' in my ears yet.

Well, when we were joggin' home that evenin', sorrowful enough, and feelin' frightened like, says my mother, "Patsy, my boy, the sight of the eyes is better larnin' than books, an' faix, you're a fool, like your father, if you haven't larned a good lesson this day." And—rest her soul!—I took her advice, and never mixed or meddled with rebels nor Fenians, and, plase goodness, never will.

THE CAPTAIN OF THE NORTHFLEET.



O often is the proud deed
done
By men like this at Duty's
call;
So many are the honours won
By them, we cannot wear
them all!

They make the heroic commonplace,
And dying thus the natural way;
Yet is our world-wide English race
Ennobled by that death, To-day!

It brings the thoughts that fathom things
To anchor fast where billows roll;
It stirs us with a sense of wings
That strive to lift the earthiest soul.

Love was so new, and life so sweet,
But at the call he left the wine
And sprang full-statured to his feet,
Responsive to the touch divine.

*"Nay, dear, I cannot see you die.
For me, I have my work to do
Up here. Down to the boat. Good-bye,
God bless you. I shall see it through."*

We read, until the vision dims
And drowns; but, ere the pang be past,
A tide of triumph overbrims
And breaks with light from heaven at last.

Thro' all the blackness of that night
A glory streams from out the gloom;

His steadfast spirit holds the light
That shines till Night is overcome.

The sea will do its worst, and life
Be sobbed out in a bubbling breath;
But firmly in the coward strife
There stands a man who hath vanquish'd
Death!

A soul that conquers wind and wave,
And towers above a sinking deck;
A bridge across the gaping grave;
A rainbow rising o'er the wreck.

He saved others; saved the name
Unsullied that he gave his wife;
And dying with so pure an aim,
He had no need to save his life.

Lord! how they shame the life we live,
These sailors of our sea-girt isle,
Who cheerily take what Thou mayst give,
And go down with a heavenward smile!

The men who sow their lives to yield
A glorious crop in lives to be;
Who turn to England's harvest-field
The unfruitful furrows of the sea.

With such a breed of men so brave,
The Old Land has not had her day;
But long, her strength, with crested wave,
Shall ride the seas, the proud old way.

GERALD MASSEY.

"SUNSHINE IN THE RAIN."



"THE SKY IS BLUE AGAIN."

LOOK out, look out, my little maid ;
The rain is falling fast,
And all the sky with gathering shade
Of cloud is overcast."

"Oh ! mother dear, big drops I hear
Beat on the window-pane,
But in the sky a light I spy
Of sunshine in the rain."

The clouds rolled by, out broke the rays,
 Glinting athwart the shower,
 Setting the rain-drops all a-blaze
 Like pearls on leaf and flower.
 "Oh! mother dear, the heaven is clear,
 The sky is blue again,
 The air is bright with jewelled light
 Of sunshine in the rain."

The ripening years passed o'er the maid
 Since that sweet summertide ;
 The girl is now a matron staid
 With children by her side.
 When round her life the clouds grow rife
 Of sorrow and of pain,
 She knows from Heaven that light is given
 Like sunshine in the rain. J. F. WALLER.

KHIVA AND THE CENTRAL ASIATIC QUESTION.

BY A DWELLER IN ST. PETERSBURG.



"**A**HY do your papers make such a stir about Khiva?" said an intelligent Russian to me the other day, at St. Petersburg, over our evening "tea and lemon." "England and Russia perfectly understand each other; all the really important points at issue were settled years ago, and there's nothing left now but a trivial question of boundaries, hardly worth mentioning."

"A question of boundaries may become very important sometimes, though," remarked I; "the Rhine frontier, for instance, and the mouth of the Danube."

"Bah!" rejoined my friend, "that's nothing to the purpose. Russia and Great Britain are the two pioneers of civilisation in the East, and ought to support each other with heart and soul, instead of squabbling about trifles. The establishment of a great overland trade will benefit both parties, and we are only clearing the way for it by putting down Khivan brigandage. You might trust us a little more, I think."

These words represent fairly enough the public opinion of Russia with regard to the Khiva Question; but it is worth while to examine how far this view is borne out by the facts. A Russian tradesman, when endeavouring to conclude an all-important bargain, invariably contrives to forget it till he is actually rising to depart, and then brings it in as a matter of no moment. In like manner, a Russian statesman, when about to grasp the whole end and aim of years of diplomacy, speaks of it in a careless off-hand way, as "a trivial question of boundaries, hardly worth mentioning." However, in such cases, the right of translation is reserved; and the question which is pronounced by Russia to be wholly without importance, may yet have a grave interest for ourselves.

The value of states is not to be measured by square miles of area or millions of population; and

it must be admitted that, taken solely on its own merits, the territory which is fast becoming an apple of discord to the whole civilised world is insignificant enough. Upon the left bank of the Oxus, a few hundred miles above the point where it discharges itself into the Sea of Aral, there crops up out of the endless sands of the Kara-Koum Desert an oasis of fertile soil, in the centre of which stands a quaint little Asiatic town, consisting of a fortified citadel and a network of straggling, narrow, dirty streets—the whole city being surrounded by a high wall of baked clay, after the pattern (though on a much smaller scale) of those of Damascus and Jerusalem. The houses are of the usual Oriental type, thick-walled, narrow-windowed, and surrounded by gardens. The Khan's palace and grounds (which latter are cultivated almost exclusively by foreign captives*) are situated within the *enceinte* of the citadel, which holds the same position towards the rest of the place as the Kremlin in Moscow. The city itself contains seventeen mosques, twenty-two schools, and two hundred and sixty shops, and numbers a population variously stated at from four to twenty thousand souls. The outer wall has a circuit of four miles (nearly the same as that of Jerusalem), and has within the last few months been strengthened and mounted with cannon. This city and this territory are the town and Khanate of Khiva;† and the Khiva Question is simply this: Shall Russia be allowed to make a permanent occupation of the Khanate? and if so, where is her advance to stop?

I have said that size is no criterion of value in

* One of these prisoners (a Russian by birth) has lately been sent home after a three years' captivity.

† The only three descriptions of Khiva now extant are curiously at variance with each other. M. Danilevski speaks of twelve gates, M. Vambéry of only nine; the former gives the city a population of not more than four thousand, while the latter asserts it to contain from three to four thousand houses, and upwards of twenty thousand inhabitants. Upon M. Khanikoff's plan of Khiva is traced a wall six feet in thickness by seven feet in height, surrounded by a deep moat; while M. Danilevski makes it twenty-five feet thick by twenty-eight feet high, and says nothing of any moat at all!

political arithmetic; and indeed it is sufficiently curious to note how apparently trifling are the stakes for which the world's great games of chance have been played. A petty tribe in the south of Italy became the *causa teterrima* which pitted Rome against Carthage. A little Syrian town had the power to precipitate Europe upon Asia in an avalanche of ruin that lasted for more than a century. The possession of Northern Italy was the prize for which Charles the Fifth and Francis the First contended during twenty-three years of bloody and almost uninterrupted warfare. The disputed heritage of the feeblest descendant of Philip the Second deluged Spain and Flanders with the best blood of six nations. The conflicting claims upon Silesia of the Houses of Hapsburg and Hohenzollern brought down upon Europe the War of the Pragmatic Sanction, and the sorer agony of the Seven Years' War. The ill-peopled and half-savage provinces of the Lower Danube have in our own time convulsed the whole civilised world.

And so, too, Khiva, small as it is, has held a prominent place in the councils of Russia ever since Perovski and his twelve thousand, vainly attempting to reach it, perished ignobly in the sands of the central desert. Apart from the positive benefits accruing from its subjugation (with which I shall have occasion to deal later on), the mere negative advantage of immunity from attack must needs be a powerful motive. Peopled by a restless and warlike race, holding a commanding military position, the little principality has been a thorn in the side of Russian Turkestan for years past; and under the rule of its present sovereign, an active and daring young man of seven-and-twenty, this annoyance has risen to a height. The commercial treaties that bind Kashgar, the guarantees of neutrality which restrain Bokhara, would be palpably out of place here; nothing but utter extinction will suffice.

If Russia is to advance at all (and advance she must and will) the first thing to be done is to sweep away, at once and for ever, the guerillas who infest her flanks and rear. Twice has the threatened blow been delayed by unforeseen hindrances; but now the matter is being taken up in earnest. The bravery of the Khivans, the difficult *entourage* of their country, the impossibility of concentrating a large force beyond the Caspian, may possibly protract the struggle for a few months, but sooner or later Khiva must fall.

Khiva, then, being once occupied (and it is abundantly certain that, for reasons which I shall presently state, the occupation, however emphatically spoken of as temporary by the Russian Government, *must* be a permanent one), the actual "Khiva Question" is thenceforth merged in another and a far wider one, the Question of Central Asia,

which is simply this: How far is Russia to advance? Her present position in the far East, if supported by an adequate force, is sufficiently commanding. From the new province of Kouldja (subjugated by General Kolpakovski in 1871) she holds the key of Western China, and dominates the rich territory of Kashgar. Farther to the south, she is erecting Samarcand into a great military centre, which may serve as a future base of operations against the still unsubdued Khanate of Bokhara. On the south-west, again, she has just acquired from Persia, by treaty, the fertile valley of the Attreck, lying in the angle between the southern extremity of the Caspian Sea and the frontier of Khorassan, thereby at once securing her right flank against a sudden attack, bringing herself into close communication with a friendly power (Persia), and paving the way for a direct advance upon Herat.

Such, then, being the present position of affairs, it is clear that Russia, if intending farther aggression in the direction of Cabool, has three courses open to her: 1. To make a dash up the valley of the Attreck straight upon Herat. 2. To move round the right flank of Bokhara down to the Upper Oxus, and thence across the river into Badakshan. 3. To assail Bokhara itself from the base of Samarcand.

The first-named of these plans, though recommended by its shortness of route, is far too audacious to square with the present cautious policy of Russia; and the second would be costly and perilous to the last degree. On the whole, therefore, it seems more than probable that Russia's next move, after the taking of Khiva, will be a direct advance upon Bokhara—an advance which must (if no foreign power interfere) be ultimately successful. Brave as the Bokhariotes undoubtedly are, and unmatched in their own peculiar style of warfare, they are still (as has been amply demonstrated by the exploits of General Romanovski in 1866) no match for a disciplined Russian army in the open field; and Russia has yet another method of dealing with Asiatics, which was expounded to me with great complacency, some little time ago, by a Russian officer of high rank, who had himself put it in practice with good effect.

"When we were down there," said he, stroking his moustache with the air of a man who has just discovered some great civilising invention, "we never wasted time in pursuing these fellows, but simply beset the water-courses, for which they were forced to make sooner or later, both for their own sake and that of their beasts; and then, with all the advantages of position and preparation on our side, we were sure to get the best of it."

"Well, that might do well enough with a few scattered tribes," I ventured to remark, "but how

if the Mohammedan feudatories were to league together against you, and proclaim a holy war, or *jihad*, as they call it?"

"Bah!" retorted the veteran, with an air of grand, indulgent contempt, "you don't suppose we care for *that*? All that we should need to do in such a case would be to give each of the lesser Khans a few thousand roubles and a few hundred Cossacks—allow them to exhaust themselves in mutual warfare—and within five years' time we might march an army from Samarcand to Herat without burning a cartridge."

It will be seen that all these plans presuppose an advance of many hundred miles into a difficult and comparatively unknown country; and it is in view of this contingency that the real value of Khiva as a Russian possession becomes apparent. The old rule of never leaving a fortress in your rear which cannot be masked or taken, holds doubly true in the case of an advance with comparatively small forces over an almost boundless extent of perfectly exposed country. Masked Khiva cannot be; taken it must be. Russia's right flank being then secured by Persia, and her rear guarded by the occupation of Khiva, the conquered Principality, as the one patch of fertile soil between the Kara-Koum Desert on the one hand and the Kizil-Koum on the other, naturally asserts itself as a suitable place for a permanent camp—a kind of half-way house, so to speak, between European Russia and Afghanistan. The resources of the country may be developed in the same way as those of the Cau-

casus, and the former nest of brigandage erected into a strong military colony, after the model of Petigorsk and Vladikavkaz.*

But there is yet another purpose to be served by the occupation of the Principality, which, though not so generally known as either of the foregoing, is not a whit less important. For years past, a great undertaking has haunted the minds of Russian engineers, and it has recently been pronounced feasible by the most skilful among them—nothing less than the turning of the Oxus back into its original channel, and pouring its waters into the Caspian instead of the Sea of Aral. The feat itself is trifling compared with those which have been achieved during the last five years, and has already been twice accomplished centuries ago, with infinitely ruder appliances than those possessed by the nineteenth century; but the results to be obtained thereby are such as can hardly be exaggerated. A high-road from the very gates of Krasnovodsk (the new Russian port on the eastern shore of the Caspian) right across the Kara-Koum Desert to the oasis of Khiva—a perfectly clear line of communication for nineteen hundred miles into the heart of Central Asia—these are stakes worth playing for.

With the course of the river once changed—with a standing camp established at Khiva—with a line of transport steamers on the Oxus—Russia will be able to pour battalion after battalion into the still unsubdued territories that bound her to the east, in a way which the last generation never dreamed of.

MARY'S DREAM.

IN TWO CHAPTERS.—CHAPTER THE FIRST.



WAS about two-and-twenty when my grandfather, Mr. Earnshawe, of Beech Hill, S—shire, wrote to ask me to spend a few days of a short holiday I was taking, at his house. My mother was his eldest daughter, and my father, Mark Phillot, needs no introduction, having made himself a name in the engineering profession. I had been brought up in his footsteps, and at the age of sixteen was sent as pupil to a very clever, go-ahead man in the north of England. A year after, I went abroad, and had been pretty well occupied ever since. At the time of which I tell you I had just returned from a few months' sojourn in Russia. For my age I had seen a good deal of the world, and sometimes in a very rough form. I was blessed with good health and plenty of energy. To complete the description of myself, I will just mention that I was six feet high, broad in proportion, blue-eyed, light-haired, and,

in short, not a bad-looking young fellow. My father, who was a rather austere man, said I did not take sufficiently serious views of life. My mother said that I had a very affectionate disposition. So I had. I fell in love at the least provocation.

My mother's family had lived at Beech Hill for many generations, and my grandfather was known and respected for miles round as a fine old country gentleman. We were very proud of him, and of my grandmother also. What a dear old lady she was, and how clever! Yet so quiet and unassuming that those who did not know her would never have suspected that she had more general knowledge in her little finger than they in their whole body. She read almost every book that came out, and understood it too. But she was no blue-stocking.

* I have heard this scheme repeatedly broached by Russian officers of undoubted experience, who evidently regarded it as the natural sequel of the expedition.

She could manage her house well, and give sound advice when needed to her poor neighbours. Then she knew all about cooking, and making jams and coddlements for sick people. I used to stay with them a good deal in my holidays when I was a boy, and in the winter time it was quite a treat to catch cold there. The warming-pan every night, treacle posset, wine-whey, and unlimited black currant jam. I used to have fearful relapses every evening.

In his letter my grandfather mentioned that my cousin, Mary Earnshawe, looked forward to seeing me. Mary was the eldest daughter of my grandfather's eldest son, and being a great favourite had, like myself, spent a good deal of time at Beech Hill when a child. My Uncle John's family was large, and therefore he was not sorry to get one of his daughters well provided for; it was also necessary that my grandmother, who was not strong, should have a cheerful companion who would take some of the household cares off her shoulders. I remembered Mary, a sturdy, round-faced little girl, up to any fun and mischief. My recollections also extended to a very stained and fruity pinafore, frock often out at the gathers, scratched arms, and marginal references round her mouth connected with strawberries and other fruits. It was now eight years since I had seen her, with the exception of once when she was walking with a governess, and looked shy and prim. I was pleased with the prospect of meeting her again, for we had been on the whole very good friends.

At the time of which I write there was no railway in that part of the country, so I went down by coach. It was pleasant summer weather, and at last I was set down at the white gate of the carriage-drive, and in a minute more was met and most warmly welcomed by my grandfather and grandmother. After a host of inquiries as to the well-being of my belongings, my grandmother said, "Why, Mark, have you forgotten Mary?" and a young lady who had been standing in the background came forward blushing and smiling.

"Is that Mary?" I exclaimed; "good gracious, what a change!" and I blushed more than she had done when they all laughed. For I had pictured to myself a short, sturdy, rosy young woman, not exactly in a pinafore, but a sort of good-natured grown up girl. Here I was quite taken aback by a vision of grace and blue muslin, which at last arranged itself into the following details:—

A tall, well-shaped girl, rather plump than otherwise, but easy and graceful. Dark brown hair, simply arranged. Face rather pale, but bright and healthy-looking, and rounded cheeks which could deepen now and then into a lovely rose tint. The merry grey eye and smiling mouth were all that remained to my mind of the old Mary. Then there was something so ærial, and spotless, and faultless about the blue muslin. Well, Time, they say, works wonders.

I had arrived just in time for dinner, and when that hospitable meal was over, Mary proposed to show me the alterations in the garden, while our elders took their after-dinner nap.

"Well, Mary," I said, as we sauntered along, "I should hardly have known you. You are wonderfully altered and improved."

"Thank you, Mark," she answered, laughing; "of course you mean to be complimentary, but you evidently thought there was room for improvement."

"You were always a jolly little girl," I went on, "but you are as different as possible to what I expected. Am I changed, do you think?"

"Yes, you're altered in some ways—a great deal bigger, for instance—but I shall suspend my judgment as to the improvement."

"That speech was like your old self. But what a change there is here! The nut-trees have been cut down—is not that a pity? And the old walk round the garden wall where we used to play horses, it's all taken away, and cabbages planted!"

"Oh, it's much better to make the ground useful. It was always a sloppy old walk, and we don't want to play horses now. How hard you used to drive me in those days, Mark!"

"I have never driven anything since half so unmanageable as you were, Mary. Your idea of a horse was perpetual kicking and plunging."

And so we chatted on very pleasantly, revisited old spots, talked of old times and old friends, and became again quite cousinly and confidential.

After tea we had a game at whist. Mary and my grandfather were partners, my grandmother and I. Now it is an odd thing that, though the old gentleman was at times very hasty and the old lady was most gentle and even-tempered, this game seemed to change their characters entirely. He played as if he thought it all a great joke, laughed whether he lost or won, and talked a great deal more than was orthodox; whereas my grandmother bent her whole mind to it, sat bolt upright, held her cards firmly, and was unmistakably annoyed when she lost.

For a considerable time the cards were against us, and my playing being also none of the best, my grandmother began to look at me with some disapproval, mingled with pity. While she was sorting her cards, with a very grave countenance, my grandfather gave me a wink, and glanced at Mary, who simultaneously, with a comical look, passed the king and queen of trumps to me under the table. I was sharp enough to understand what they meant, and gave her my two lowest cards in exchange. That hand went off beautifully, and my grandmother's countenance became quite pleasant. It was radiant when we rose from the table, for we had beaten them hollow, thanks to a little more manipulation. She then explained to me quite graciously where I had erred in my play, and my

grandfather remarked gravely, but with a twinkle in his eye, that no one could play better than his old woman when she bent her mind to it.

The next morning at breakfast my grandmother received a letter, which, after carefully reading twice, and wiping her spectacles between each perusal, she handed to her husband. He glanced over the first page, and then very energetically remarked, "Confound it!" but meeting his wife's admonishing glance, added quietly—

"Well, poor things, they're welcome; but I hope they won't stay too long."

"Whatever is it about, grandmamma?" exclaimed Mary.

"Oh, it's only from poor Mrs. Lyton, my dear. She and Jane are going to spend a month in Birmingham, and they offer to stay a day or two with us, just to break the journey."

"Oh, grandmamma, just now when we are all so cosy!"

"But, Mary, love, we must be hospitable; and think what a deal of trouble she's had in her life!"

"At all events, this time it is only for a day or two," said my grandfather resignedly. "As they are going on to Birmingham they can't stop, you see. When are they coming, old woman?"

"By the coach this afternoon, I believe," said my grandmother.

"Oh, dear, dear, dear!" sighed Mary.

However, Mary and I had a jolly three-mile walk together that morning, to order some poultry from a farmhouse in honour of the extra guests, so Mrs. Lyton and Jane did some good in their generation. They arrived, as we expected, by the afternoon coach.

Now I must say a little about Mrs. Lyton. She had been a widow in needy circumstances as long back as I could remember, and her married life had not been a happy one, which, I think, was not to be wondered at. She was a dissenter, and held in great estimation by the somewhat obscure sect to which she had attached herself, after trying various denominations. They were very kind to her at Beech Hill, for she was my grandmother's first cousin, and many a present of clothing and well-filled hamper had they sent to her. My father and mother had been very kind also.

Though she expressed much gratitude for the presents, she was always moaning over our spiritual state, and we knew did not speak very well of us behind our backs. Perhaps, thinking of us as she did, she could not conscientiously do so. I don't want to be hard upon her, but I think her fault was spiritual pride.

It was an awful trial when she and Jane came to stay either with us or at Beech Hill. They were always trying to do us good, and evidently thought us in a very bad way. Why, that Jane would even look shocked at my mother, than whom a better

Christian never lived, though she was not always talking about it. Then when once established in a house it was a difficult matter to get them out again. They were tall, black-eyed women, with high complexions, stiff hair, lugubrious expressions, and scanty petticoats. It really was fun to see them eyeing grandmother's caps, or Mary's flowing dresses.

Mr. Cowley, the vicar, had been asked to dinner, and though he was a pleasant man and a great friend, yet that meal was not nearly so merry as the one on the previous day. The two new-comers looked so very much as if they had something on their minds, that my grandfather tried to cheer them up, and called upon me to relate one or two comic anecdotes I had told them the day before. I got through one: they smiled grimly, and I saw they thought me wicked, though Mr. Cowley laughed heartily.

Then Mr. Cowley made a pun, at which Mrs. Lyton looked much depressed; so he talked of the small-pox which had broken out in the next parish, and that cheered her up a little. We did not try to be funny again, and felt slightly relieved when the ladies left the table. My grandfather called Mary back, patted her on the shoulder, and told her to keep up her spirits. He then facetiously remarked that there was a chilliness in the air, and advised us to fill up our glasses, at which we laughed, and were soon very comfortable.

When we joined the ladies we found them talking very seriously over their tea; so, after casting over in my mind for the least obnoxious subject of conversation, I began to tell my grandmother about a family tree I was drawing out, and how I wanted her help on one or two points, and also wished to make extracts from the entries in their old family Bible. She asked Mary to fetch it, and my cousin and I, seating ourselves a little apart from the rest, were soon deep in its records; while Mrs. Lyton stated to the company generally, and the vicar in particular, the points on which she differed from the Church.

It was a very old Bible, in a black leather cover, and as it was much too worn to be used daily, my grandmother kept it locked up in her own room. Not only the fly-leaves, but even the margins of many of the pages were covered with writing, and extra leaves had been pasted in to receive the later records. The earlier names were entered without any method, and interspersed with various memoranda and receipts, such as "a wash for weak eyes," and "a posset to cure a colic." We found the dates of our own births, and then traced backwards; but there were many ramifications.

At last Mary said, "This Bible has been a great deal used, Mark. What a comfort it must have been to many a one of our family, and how much influence it must have had! It is a pathetic old book."

"Yes," I replied, slowly turning over the well-worn leaves, "here are you and I, Mary, full of life, and here are the names of others, resembling us no doubt, not only in face, but in thought and feeling, who have passed away, and we only know of them through the inscriptions on their tombstones and the entries in this Bible. The poor old book is getting very shaky; I wonder whether it will last long enough for other fingers to turn over the leaves and say, when they see our names, 'This was my great-grandfather,' or grandmother, as the case may be."

Mary looked very grave, and showed me her own name—"Mary Earnshawe, born 1702."

"See," she said, "farther on this same Mary marries, in 1723, Caleb Poynton, gent.—and here, 'Mary, wife of Caleb Poynton, died 1730, child-lesse.'"

A tear dropped on the page. Was it not quite natural that I should take her hand and hold it?

After a few moments I looked up, and saw Mrs. Lyton surveying us with strong disapproval, and heard my grandmother, whose attention she had directed our way, whisper, "Great friends always, you know." So I pressed Mary's hand, and rose, saying I would take the Bible into my own room, and then I could make the extracts I wanted.

My week's holiday passed very quickly. After leaving Beech Hill I was to return home for a few days, and then depart for Canada, where I had a two years' engagement. I began to feel very restless and uncomfortable, and to loathe the idea of Canada, although I had before been delighted with the appointment. The cause of all this was—Mary.

Not being unfamiliar with the symptoms, I knew well enough from what I was suffering; but this attack appeared to be really serious. On the last morning I rose early, as was my habit, and strolled in a pensive mood round the garden. Soon I descried the fair occupant of my thoughts gathering strawberries for breakfast. Of course I went to assist her, and I suppose waxed very sentimental, for at last she laughed rather shyly, and said—

"Really, Mark, you must not be so spoony. We all know your weakness, but Mrs. Lyton and Jane have told grandmamma we are flirting awfully, and so I want you to be very sensible this last morning."

"Hang Mrs. Lyton and Jane!" I answered. "Why should there be anything awful in our liking each other? We have done that for years, and I have not been flirting a bit, Mary. I wish you would think better of me. You don't know what pain it will be to me to leave to-day. I want you to promise that while I am away you will think of me often and kindly, and that you will write to me now and then, and tell me all the Beech Hill news, and especially about yourself. I suppose I ought to say no more, as I have to work hard before I am my own master; but, Mary, if you could also

promise not to fall in love with anybody till I come back, it would be a great comfort."

Again her hand was in mine. How pretty she looked in her pink print dress!

"Promise, Polly," I repeated, but just at that moment Mrs. Lyton came round the corner. With a smile to which vinegar was butter and honey, she wished us good morning, and telling us breakfast was waiting, carried us off to the house.

I suppose my grandmother saw something tell-tale in our faces, for she looked very sympathising, petted Mary, and was even more careful than usual that I had enough, or rather too much, to eat, and of the best on the table, for I believe she still looked upon me as a growing boy.

"You must let us hear what you think of Canada, Mark," she said.

"I will be sure to write, grandmamma, and I have been asking Mary to let me hear sometimes how you are all going on."

"Of course she will, my boy," interposed my grandfather cheerily. "You be a good, steady lad——"

"He has always been that," said my grandmother.

"Ay, that he has. We've had no occasion to be ashamed of him, thank God! Well, keep up your spirits, Mark—in two years we'll have you back with us, and who knows what may turn up in that time?"

A grave expression passed over his handsome, genial face, and he continued—

"I ought at my age to know better than look forward so far; but I should like to see thee again, lad."

I grasped the kind old hand stretched out to me, and a sudden impulse made me rise from my chair and, big young man of two-and-twenty as I was, stoop over my grandfather, kiss his forehead, and then hastily leave the room. A strange presentiment had come over me that in two years Beech Hill would not be what it was then.

My heart quite ached as I finished my packing, but I soon heard my grandfather's voice calling to me that the coach was in sight. Down I ran, took an affectionate farewell of my grandmother, and a very formal one of her guests. My grandfather and Mary walked with me down the carriage-drive. While yet hidden from the road by a group of laurels, he said in his hearty way—

"Now, my lad, good-bye and God bless you. Kiss Mary and be off."

What a thoughtful old gentleman he was! I did kiss Mary, and she whispered, "I promise."

As I looked down at her from the box I thought she seemed very grave and pale. My grandfather waved his hat and off we went. The weather was just as fine as it had been a week ago—the country just as lovely—but I thought of neither; I felt very low indeed.

HESTER MORLEY'S PROMISE.

BY HESBA STRETTON,

AUTHOR OF "THE DOCTOR'S DILEMMA," ETC. ETC.

CHAPTER THE FOURTH.

AN INTERVIEW.

OVER John Morley's face closed again much of the old gloom and austerity, as he looked from one to the other of his visitors; gazing longest and hardest into the square set face of the younger man, who regarded him, in his turn, with an unflinching, judicial eye. The three men were three brothers doubtless, though the weakness and mercifulness of age were creeping over the eldest.

"We are come," said the minister deprecatingly, "because certain rumours have reached the ears of the church——"

"The church has many ears and long ones," interrupted John Morley, with a grim smile, "but no doubt it has heard correctly. I apprehend the purport of these rumours."

"But, brother," pursued the minister in his most soothing accents, "it is not as if you were one of the unknown and inconsiderable members of the church. You are one of our chief men—a polished pillar in the temple. We come only to expostulate and beseech. It is written in the Scriptures, 'Thou shalt rebuke thy brother, and not suffer sin upon him.'"

The minister gazed at John Morley with mingled entreaty and sadness; but his companion, who was eager to pursue the assault with greater vigour, quickly broke the reverential pause which followed his quotation from the Bible.

"Come, brother Morley," he said, speaking as if he were a brother very far removed, "there's no need to beat longer about the bush. You are thinking of taking a second wife."

"That is essentially a domestic arrangement, Mr. Waldron," said John Morley, girding himself willingly for the contest; "the church has nothing to do with it. If it were a question of moral discipline the church must needs take note of it. But it has no voice in this matter—neither of assent nor veto."

"Tush, brother!" answered Mr. Waldron sharply, "we come but semi-officially. As your brethren, we are bound to watch your conduct; and if your choice had fallen upon a godly woman, not a word would have been said. But when we see one of ourselves about to form an ensnaring union, our constitution as a pure church gives us the right, and lays it upon us as a duty, to warn, rebuke, and protest. This marriage ought not to be."

"Yes, dear brother," said the minister, emboldened by Mr. Waldron's words, and pressing into

the breach he had made, "the rule of the apostle is simple: 'Be ye not unequally yoked with unbelievers.'"

"The unbeliever," replied John Morley slowly, "signified to the early church the heathen and idolater. My future wife has been baptised, and is probably a communicant in the Church of England, therefore she cannot be called an unbeliever in that sense. But there is another saying of the apostle: 'The unbelieving wife is sanctified by the husband.'"

There was a short silence again, while Mr. Waldron drew a well-worn Bible out of his pocket, and turned over its pages impatiently.

"Listen then, John Morley," he said: "in the thirteenth chapter of Nehemiah, beginning at the twenty-third verse, it is thus written:—

"In those days also saw I Jews that had married wives of Ashdod, of Ammon, and of Moab:

"And their children spake half in the speech of Ashdod, and could not speak in the Jews' language, but according to the language of each people.

"And I contended with them, and cursed them, and smote certain of them, and plucked off their hair, and made them swear by God, saying, Ye shall not give your daughters unto their sons, nor take their daughters unto your sons, or for yourselves.

"Did not Solomon king of Israel sin by these things? yet among many nations was there no king like him, who was beloved of his God, and God made him king over all Israel: nevertheless even him did outlandish women cause to sin.

"Shall we then hearken unto you to do all this great evil, to transgress against our God in marrying strange wives?"

Mr. Waldron read the passage with an evidently keen sympathy with the indignant governor; and he looked hard into John Morley's rigid face. The latter was not a man to yield quietly to the arbitrary rule even of Nehemiah the Tirshatha, and he met the judicial frown bent upon him with cool composure.

"Yet it had been permitted to the ancient Jews," he said, "under the rule of Moses, when they saw among the captives a damsel who pleased them, to take her to wife. Also David, the man after God's own heart, took to wife Maacah, the daughter of Talmai, king of Geshur."

"And she bare him Absalom," interrupted Mr. Waldron eagerly, "the rebel and the assassin."

The words were still upon his lips when there came a gentle tap at the door, and it was opened

from without before John Morley could reach it. Rose appeared in the doorway; and the minister and Mr. Waldron regarded her with surprised admiration. Again the sombre room seemed the brighter for her presence, and her clear, fresh young voice sounded pleasantly to their ears, after their own grave and deep tones.

"I thought I should find you and Hetty alone, Mr. Morley," she said, smiles and blushes following one another closely upon her fair face, "and the bell did not ring, so I came straight on here. I

"This is the young lady who has consented to be my wife, Mr. Waldron," said John Morley, with an ill-concealed triumph in the effect her appearance had produced.

She stole a bashful look at the great man of the neighbourhood, and curtsied profoundly: a boarding-school curtsy, learnt from a dancing-master, yet not without a certain diffident grace of its own. Mr. Waldron's face relaxed from its severity.

"Well, brother," he said, with greater affability than before, "I wish you joy.—And you also, my



"THAT WAS HOW SHE LOOKED."

have only left a book behind me, and I came back to fetch it."

John Morley had approached her, and drawn her hand through his arm with an air of pride. Hester too, as if attracted by some irresistible charm, had descended from her seat, and pressed close beside her. This girl possessed some fascination which drew all hearts to her, though one might know lovelier women, wiser women, women tenfold better. The few words she had uttered were simple, but like the foolish old songs with sweet tunes, which are heard by chance, and which one always wishes to hear once more; the three men were silent in the dull parlour when she ceased speaking, as if they waited to hear her voice again.

dear; only we must make you one of ourselves as speedily as possible. We have just been speaking of it to John Morley. You must join the church, when you become his wife and the mother of this little girl."

"Yes, sir," murmured the girl, with charming shamefacedness, while a shade of gravity clouded her sunny face for a moment. The old minister came forward, and addressed her in a tone of earnest solemnity.

"It will be the turning-point of your life," he said, "to become the wife of a godly man. Hitherto you have been wandering in the paths of vanity, but here you will be safely enfolded from the snares of this world. Morning, noon, and night a voice

will sound in your ears : 'This is the way ; walk ye in it.' You will be snatched from the world, and gathered into the bosom of the church."

Once again the girl shivered and looked in bewilderment at the faces around her, wondering what their strange manner of greeting her might mean. But they had each put on a smile for her, and her nature was buoyant enough in itself to find complacency everywhere. John Morley's handsome face, moreover, wore an expression which any woman would be pleased to see in her future husband ; and she bridled her pretty head with a half-affected air of coquetry.

"I must go directly," she said in a girlish tone of importance ; "I have a hundred things to do yet to-night. There is my book on the table, Mr. Morley. Thank you very much. Good night—good night.—Good-bye, my little Hetty."

The door closed upon her, but the three men did not resume their seats ; and Hester remained standing on the hearth, listening eagerly for their next words. The controversy had come to an unexpected end. Yet John Morley drew his little daughter within his arms, in an unaccustomed caress, and stroked down her tangled hair with a trembling hand.

"If the church be scandalised," he said, in a voice which he rendered steady by a great effort, "I can withdraw from it. There are other forms of worship and other sects not greatly differing from our own. My intended wife has been brought up in the Established Church. If it be necessary—"

The pause was of even more significance than the words, and the old minister opened his eyes widely in unutterable astonishment. Mr. Waldron was the first to speak.

"It is a matter for expostulation," he said, "not of reproof or censure. Let each man act according to his own conscience.—What do you say, Mr. Watson ?"

"It is a question encompassed with difficulties," answered the minister diffidently, "and every man must act according to his own inward light. But since brother Morley has gone so far as to promise marriage to this young creature, I do not see how he can conscientiously break off his covenant with her."

With that utterance the subject seemed settled. A few minutes later, Mr. Waldron shook hands with John Morley, with distant brotherliness, and went away with the minister. John Morley kissed his child, and bade her go to bed and dream of her new mother. But Hester loitered for a minute or two after he had reopened his large book, as if longing to say something to him. It was evidently an effort—an effort which she felt constrained to make ; and at last, when he believed himself to be alone, John Morley heard a small, timid voice speaking from the threshold, and saw Hester look-

ing back at him with anxious eyes. What she had to say before she left him was simply this :

"I hope you will not make God angry with you, father."

CHAPTER THE FIFTH.

A MONOMANIAC.

ONE of the three gables of John Morley's house rose a storey higher than the others, and under its pointed roof was a large attic, lighted by a great dormer window, which overlooked the neighbouring buildings, and caught a glimpse of fields and woods beyond, with a range of distant hills, lying blue and cloudlike against the sky-line. It was the pleasantest room in the dark old house. Beneath it lay some printing offices, black and grimy, containing ancient presses, covered over with dust and cobwebs ; for John Morley had given up the printing business, which his predecessor had carried on, and the attic in the gable was his only workroom. He employed also but one workman, a stranger, who looked like a foreigner, and who had been passing through the town on the tramp the first week after his marriage with Hester's mother.

The young wife had taken pity upon the footsore and famishing wanderer, and had persuaded her husband to give him a trial at his professed trade as a bookbinder. This trial was a complete success. He had learned his trade in Paris, his father having been an English artisan, who had married a Frenchwoman from Burgundy. The amount of work accomplished by this single man was marvellous, and the price he set upon it extravagant ; yet such was the taste and beauty of the workmanship, that John Morley seldom received less for it than the high sum at which his binder valued it. Throughout the whole county no binding was esteemed unless it had issued from John Morley's workshop.

The binding-room, wherein this solitary artisan had worked for ten years, was not only light and sunny, but it was odoriferous with the pleasant scent of Russia leather and morocco, and in the summer with the flowers which he cultivated in boxes and pots about his window-sill. His press and work-table stood in the wide bay formed by the casement, where the daylight fell upon him long after the court below and the sombre parlour were obscured in twilight. Over the rusty old grate, which was formed only of a few rude bars of iron fastened into the chimney-jamb, stood a rack containing his tools for the printing of his ornamental devices upon the gold-leaf. All around on the shelves and the sloping ceiling were displayed specimens of the tasteful branch of art which he carried on in unbroken monotony from day to day, and from year to year.

He was a man so quiet, perhaps from his ten years of lonely work, that never was any sound

heard of him in his attic, which indeed was isolated from the rest of the house by the empty rooms below, though there was a door out of them which communicated with the second floor of the dwelling.

There was another entrance to the workroom by a door into a passage running along the side of the house, of which he kept the key, in order to let himself in at any hour; for he was an early riser, and often came to his work at five o'clock in the morning, and remained until late at night, taking neither pleasure nor rest beyond that absolutely necessary for health.

He was a small, tough, withered-looking man, stooping a good deal, and with thin, scanty hair. Always, upon reaching the deserted printing offices, it was his custom to exchange his boots for a pair of soundless list slippers, which could make no noise upon the bare boards of his attic. He was a nervous man, starting at every sound, of which however but few ever reached him in his solitude, for the window opened upon the court instead of the street, and whatever rare tumult might be in the latter only came to his ears softened by the distance. So quiet was the gable that the house-sparrows gathered there in numbers, and their shrill, pert chirping seemed the only sound that did not discompose him.

The sole pleasure of this secluded and laborious being was to see Hester push open the door of his attic, and, with her book under her arm, creep quietly in and climb upon a tall chair which stood at a corner of the press. There she watched him spreading the delicate gold-leaf upon the crimson or blue morocco of his bindings, and stamping them carefully with his elegant devices. Very seldom any conversation passed between these two; but sometimes the child mounted upon a ladder, and sat on the highest step, which reached nearly to the ceiling, and there read aloud, in a low, pleasant murmur of a voice, which was as soothing as silence itself, from the book which happened to be the favourite of the day. That was the crowning point of his pleasure; but he never sought it, and never put his sense of delight into words. If Hester ever brought him any book to be mended, however old and stained and worn, he lavished all his art upon it, pondering in his mind what new device he could discover to embellish it. The nursery rhymes and primers of Hester Morley were marvels in the decorative art of bookbinding; though they lay unseen in her bed-room, upon some shelves which he had made for her.

The second marriage of John Morley was solemnised in a distant town, and afterwards he took his young bride a short excursion, while his house was being set in order for her reception. During this time Hester almost lived in the attic, to the inexpressible delight of Lawson; a delight, however, which was mingled with a profound and smouldering

resentment against his master. He could not understand how he could need any companionship besides his child's.

"Lawson," said Hester, one day recurring to a subject which had secretly troubled her ever since the visit of Mr. Waldron and the minister to John Morley, "do you think that God will be really angry with my father for being married to another wife?"

"Ay, do I," answered Lawson, in deep accents and brief words.

"But, Lawson," she said, her face growing pale and awestricken, "it is a dreadful thing to make God angry. Miss Waldron has taught me all about it at the Sunday-school. Don't you know what he did to Sodom and Gomorrah? Suppose he sent down fire from heaven, and burnt all the house up? Or suppose he should strike my father and my new mother dead like Ananias and Sapphira? I can't help thinking about it all day long, and at nights when I awake. What should God be angry for?"

Lawson stooped over his work, breathing softly on the gold-leaf, and smoothing it out carefully with his smoothest finger.

"If God is angry with my father," continued Hester, sobbing, "I think I should like him to be angry with me as well. If Ananias and Sapphira had any little children, who would take care of them after they were struck dead? But I don't think he will be angry. Have you ever seen my new mother, Lawson?"

"You must not call her mother," said Lawson; "your mother is in heaven, with God."

"But I have promised to be like her very own daughter for ever and ever," answered Hester; "I don't know what made me promise, only my father said I ought, and it would make him happy. Lawson, I would do anything to make my father happy; and I don't think she will be the same as the step-mothers in books. What was my own mother like, Lawson?"

With slow and quiet movements, for he seemed incapable of any quick or energetic action, Lawson mounted the step-ladder, and reached an old portfolio from the highest shelf. From this he drew out an engraving, mounted upon board, and surrounded by an exquisite scroll of gilding and colouring; it was a woman's face only, a sweet, calm, colourless face, long and oval, with a placid serenity approaching to sadness upon it. The child and the workman bent over it some time in silence.

"That was how she looked," he whispered, "the last time I saw her, just before she died; and I promised, and your father promised, on our bended knees, that we'd neither have thought, nor care, nor plan, save for you and your happiness, Miss Hester. And this is the way," he cried, smiting his hands together with a sudden agony

of passion which seemed impossible in so quiet and subdued a creature, "that my master keeps his promise! Yes, God and I do well to be angry."

It might have provoked a smile to hear this puny, shrivelled, insignificant workman identify himself and his impotent resentment with God and his anger. But there was no one to smile, except Hester, who looked up into his face with wide-open eyes of terror and amazement.

"Miss Hester," he said more wildly, "this is how it is. It is seven years ago, and I've been toiling ever since to make a *dot* for you. Why! I've only taken eighteen shillings a week wages from your father, while he gets six or seven, or sometimes ten pounds a week by my work. I found out a new way of bevelling the edges, which nobody knows how to do save myself. There was a very nice little fortune for you already. Everybody was saying John Morley is rich. And so this bold, laughing, flirting, flaunting madam has married him for his money, and she will make it fly like chaff before the wind. We shall all be poor again. I've been keeping down my poor mother and myself, when I might have made money for us both."

"Is your mother very poor?" asked Hester.

"Yes. She is living with my sister in Burgundy," he answered; "both of them are widows, and they are quite poor, but for what I send them, and I haven't sent them as much as I could."

"Is my father very rich, Lawson?" asked Hester again.

"He would have been by the time you wanted your *dot*," answered Lawson.

"I don't know what a *dot* is," said Hester.

"It is the money you will want to marry a good husband with," he replied, "and now you will be poor, very poor. It's all over, and I've been a fool, and John Morley is a fool."

He threw himself half across his binding press, and covered his face with his hands; while Hester stood by looking doubtfully at his downcast attitude, and going over in her mind the strange things he had been saying.

"Do you think my own mother knows?" she asked at last in a hushed voice.

"Ay, does she," answered Lawson; "many and many a time she comes up here, and walks about with her soft, quiet feet, which I couldn't hear at all if there was any noise in the room; and she looks over my work, and pushes the right tool towards me, when I don't quite know what to do for the best. Oh, she knows all that goes on in the old house she has left. Don't you think she is often and often with you, Miss Hester, watching over you in your little bed, and sitting by you in the parlour of an evening, when you're reading? Do you never feel her near you?"

"I think I do," whispered the child, pressing close

to the visionary man, and laying her small fingers upon his warm living hand.

"She may die yet! she may die yet!" he muttered to himself; "people die easily sometimes. Then we should be all right again. There's no room for two mistresses in one house. I shall never feel her near to me when the other is here. My best work is over. I shall do no more good in the world as long as the other one is alive."

He continued muttering to himself at intervals, while he burnished the gilding under his hands. Hester mounted to her high seat upon the step-ladder, and sat watching the evening clouds, which could be seen slowly sailing towards the west across the field of sky which was visible from the window. Now and then she sighed as a child seldom sighs.

The sun went down, and the distant corners of the attic grew dusky, and filled with shadows; and when the child awoke from her long reverie, cold and troubled, she fancied readily that in the darkest of the gloom there stood the soft, light outline of a figure clothed in white, whose dim face was calm, and sweet, and sad. It was her mother, but she had entered into a covenant to be as a daughter to her father's second wife.

CHAPTER THE SIXTH.

FLUTTERING SUNSHINE.

THE motives which had determined the second Mrs. Morley to become the wife of a man fifteen years her senior, and altogether different to the beau-ideal of a husband which her girlish fancy had painted, were as complex as the motives to such marriages generally are. In the first place she had attained the age of three-and-twenty, yet, though very pretty and engaging, had met with no real opportunity of escaping from the life she hated—that of a governess in a middle-class boarding-school. There was a dreadful possibility that her attractions might fade away before she met with an establishment worthy of her; and she longed to be the mistress of a house of her own. On the other hand, John Morley had the reputation of being rich for his station, and he was a handsomer and more polished man than any of the younger men with whom she was brought into contact. Except one memory, which was sentimentally brooded over in her heart, no one had so nearly touched her frivolous affections as this grave, melancholy, handsome man of middle age, who had abandoned himself to a passionate devotion to her. She felt something of jealousy and triumph in thinking of the young wife whom he had sorrowed for so austere, and who was at last forgotten in the grave for her sake.

As the last reason, she fancied that the monotony of school life had already stolen away something of the softness and bloom of her fair face. On these

grounds she had determined upon becoming John Morley's second wife.

Very naturally she resolved to put his attachment to the test, and not to spare it. She found the new house, of which she was the mistress, gloomy and poverty-stricken in aspect, and she set her heart upon beautifying it. It was a large, rambling old place, much too large for the small family dwelling in it; and she forecast her plans for turning it all into a habitation suitable to herself.

But here she met an unexpected check, even in the first weeks of her married life. John Morley assured her, with a hundred protestations of his love, that he could not give her permission to do as she pleased with the dreary, half-furnished rooms. One room should be her own, he said, the largest in the house; and she might buy whatever she chose for it.

This was a compromise which was very disagreeable to her; but she resolved to make the most of it. Up-stairs there was a large apartment, extending from the front of the house to the back, and wainscoted with panels of oak throughout, which had been hitherto used as a warehouse.

This she fixed upon, insisting on the fulfilment of her husband's promise; and upon it she lavished all her taste and caprice, while John Morley looked on and laughed, as one laughs at a child playing at keeping house. It was a pleasant time for Rose. She enjoyed the unconditional permission given to her with the full enjoyment of one who has always been obliged to look closely to her expenditure; with a gay good-nature she gave up her plans of embellishing the rest of the house, while she concentrated herself upon this room allotted to her.

John Morley's home grew full of sound, in the place of its unbroken stillness. The blithe laugh of his young wife rippled from room to room, blended with the quieter but happy tones of his little girl. Now and then there came to his ears notes of music from Rose's piano overhead—short, merry tunes, tinkling through the empty rooms, with a suggestion of dancing steps accompanying them; though there was no one to dance except Hester, whose small feet had never before been set to music. The time was as blissful for John Morley as for his second wife, or rather immeasurably more so.

The pity was that the girl was no more than a school-girl, with nothing but a school-girl's idea of happiness. She was good-natured and good-tempered, and quite willing to do what she could to please her husband. But it had never entered her mind that his companionship alone would be sufficient for her. She had no wish whatever to reign over her new household unseen and unenvied by her neighbours. As soon as her drawing-room was furnished and decorated after her own taste, she longed to receive guests in it, who would admire

and praise it to her satisfaction. There John Morley, reserved and self-contained, made a stand.

He wanted no witnesses to his happiness. The people of Little Aston were not of his kind; there were none among them who could become his associates, or whom he would choose to be the friends of his wife. On the one hand were the worldlings, the people who wasted their time at the card-table or in the dance; on the other were the members of the church, ignorant and ill-bred, with whom he had nothing in common beyond the religious conventionalities of church membership. He was separated from the world and the church alike.

His wife might welcome to his hearth the old minister and his equally aged wife, whose gentleness could never offend or displease him; but there was no other person whom he could receive into his house with the cordiality of friendship.

Mere acquaintances Morley could not understand. To eat bread at his table was a pledge of living friendliness between host and guest. On this point no charm, or persuasion, or rebellion could avail his wife anything. He was like a rock; and the poor, silly girl, with her empty mind and light heart, beat against it in vain.

After the first novelty had worn away, John Morley, though retaining his passionate and proud love of his young wife, fell back into his old studious habits, lost himself, and her, and all his new life, in the books which came almost daily to his hand. If she invaded his quiet room, where he sat all day long, and which was too heavy and sombre for a butterfly creature like her, to ask him for some new indulgence, or to display some new possession, he put down his book only for a few minutes, and soon grew absent if she prolonged her visit.

He had no thought of unkindness in this neglect. Hester's mother had been willing to sit hour after hour, his silent companion, ready to hear him if he should like to read aloud some sentence which pleased him more than others, a sentence which to her stood alone, with none before or following it; and he had taken it for granted that Rose would do the same. Since she did not do it, but avoided his dull room, he did not complain; but it never occurred to him to alter his own habits.

Besides, after a few months, his eyes were opened to the snare into which he had fallen. He had been guilty of a blunder, he would not call it a sin, which he had formerly blamed harshly in others. He, a chief member of the church, a deacon, had entered into marriage with a worldly woman.

John Morley's creed was coloured by his gloomy temperament. He began to look upon Rose, whom he had made his nearest and dearest companion, as a soul which still walked in darkness, under the tyranny of Satan, and whose destiny was an eternal separation from all goodness and happiness. The gaiety and charms of his young wife

began to make his heart ache. He saw her treading mirthfully along the path leading to perdition.

The possibility of eternal punishment, which he had calmly and philosophically considered from a distance, was brought into his own home, he had himself taken it to his heart; it was the only dowry his wife had brought him. In the quiet of his room this thought presented itself to him with innumerable and stinging variations—that the voice, which he heard singing and babbling about his house, would one day wail in hopeless anguish, and that the heart, which he had won for himself, would be pierced through with unutterable and unavailing repentance.

It is no marvel that John Morley set himself with his whole heart and mind to the task of enlightening and converting this beloved but lost soul. He argued with his wife; he read to her; he prayed for her. He called in the minister, as he would have called in a physician had she been stricken with some malady. Rose was frightened at first, and yielded readily to tears. But after awhile she grew indignant, and then weary. Never before had it been suggested to her that anything was amiss.

She had been christened and confirmed, and had been a communicant of her church. She ran over the Commandments, and found that she had kept them from her youth up. Certainly, if she stood in any kind of danger, the whole world was full of souls who were in equal if not greater peril.

All the commotion was the result of having married an austere and narrow-minded man, who first shut her out from all the pleasures and enjoyments of her age, and then surrounded her with imaginary terrors. She began to harden herself against him, and resolved to bring up Hester after a fashion opposed to the strict rule of her father.

If there was any influence which could have won over the worldly spirit of Rose Morley to the grave but peaceful religion into whose sweet safety John Morley vainly strove to drive her, it would have been the simple faith of the child, who knew nothing of the technical phrases of any creed. But how could this gay and thoughtless girl help growing weary of her monotonous life, with a husband always burdened with spiritual anxieties for her, and a child who cared less for the plays of childhood than for the thoughts and pursuits of older years?

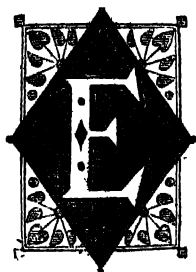
She found herself altogether out of her element—a butterfly, which had flown heedlessly into a damp and chilly cave, where it could only fold its wings, and lose the brilliant hours of the summer which was swiftly passing away. The merry laugh and the tinkling of music ceased in the house; her step grew languid, and her voice low; the blue eyes were dimmed, and the cheeks faded; but John Morley saw in the change only what he wished to see—the pain and travail of a soul which was struggling into life.

END OF CHAPTER THE SIXTH.

LOCAL TAXATION.

BY HENRY FAWCETT, M.P.

IN TWO PARTS—PART THE FIRST.



EACH year the conclusion is more impressed upon me, that probably one of the best ways to promote the study of economic science is to apply its principles to those questions of every-day life which happen at any particular time to possess the greatest practical interest. At the present day, the subject of taxation appears to fulfil these conditions in an eminent degree. I know it is sometimes said that there is little left for a financier in our country to do. Protection has been eradicated, the imposts which pressed most severely upon industry have been repealed, few of the necessities of life are now taxed, and the financial position of the country is so flourishing that the question which now most perplexes the Chancellor of the Exchequer is not to find ways and means, but to discover the best mode of appropriating a constantly recurring and rapidly increasing surplus. This is, no doubt, one way of

viewing the subject. It has, however, other and very different aspects. When taxation is spoken of in this country, it is too frequently forgotten that there is not only imperial, but also local taxation to be considered, and the one subject offers in many respects the most striking contrast to the other. For several years past, although many taxes have been remitted, and the expenditure has been kept extremely high, yet the imperial revenue has been more than sufficient to meet all demands.

When, however, we turn to local taxation, we observe an entirely different state of things. Local expenditure, meaning by that phrase the money annually raised and spent by local authorities, has been constantly increasing, until it has now reached no less a sum than £36,000,000. If the local expenditure continues to increase during the next twenty-five years in the same ratio as it has increased during the past twenty-five years, the local will considerably exceed the imperial expenditure. As previously remarked, so far as the finances of the State are con-

cerned, there has been almost invariably during many past years a balance on the right side. With regard, however, to local expenditure, exactly the reverse has taken place. Local authorities, from one end of the country to the other, are habitually spending more than their ordinary income. It not unfrequently happens that the expenditure is so greatly in excess of revenue, and the deficit to be made up is consequently so large, that the amount which has to be borrowed is not far short of the entire sum raised by municipal taxation.

The following is a statement of the financial position of London in the year 1868. The description is taken from an official report, and the year 1868 is not selected for any particular reason; it does not differ, in any material respect, either from the years which preceded or from those which succeeded it.

The receipts in 1868 were as follow:—

Raised by rates	£3,470,000
„ „ dues, tolls, and fees	390,000
„ „ rents and sales of property	580,000
„ „ Government subvention	400,000
„ „ miscellaneous receipts	290,000
„ „ loans	3,200,000

The entire expenditure in 1868 was £8,000,000.*

From these figures it appears that the expenditure so far exceeded the revenue, that the amount raised by loan was only one-seventh less than the whole sum obtained from rates. But borrowing even to so alarming an extent as this would have been insufficient, had not assistance to the extent of £580,000 been obtained by rents and sales of property. It is, however, scarcely necessary to remark upon the peril involved in seeking assistance from such a source. If borrowing and selling property are resorted to simultaneously, it is only too certain that the income in future years will be diminished in proportion to the property sold, and consequently a growing expenditure will have to be met by diminished resources. The state of things disclosed by these figures is so serious, that it may be supposed that the metropolis is an exceptional case. Unfortunately, however, this is not so, for the financial position of London is typical of what is going on in other parts of the country. As previously stated, the annual amount of local expenditure in Great Britain and Ireland is £36,000,000, and the entire amount raised by local taxation is £25,000,000. This large excess of expenditure over revenue deserves most anxious consideration. It will probably be urged that the ordinary revenue is always adequate to meet the ordinary expenditure, and that the loans which are annually raised, being devoted to carry out works of permanent improvement, should be regarded not

in the light of financial deficits, but as capital embarked in eligible investments. It will also, no doubt, be said that a country which is advancing so rapidly in wealth and population can afford this local expenditure, and that the increase of expenditure is after all of trifling importance compared with the growing prosperity of the country. Pleas similar to these are very generally accepted by the public as constituting valid excuses for the large outlay upon which we have just been commenting. A little inquiry, however, will at once disclose facts which show that such a defence as is generally put forward in favour of the present local expenditure is altogether inadequate and unsatisfactory.

In the first place, it is to be remarked that the circumstances connected with the raising and spending of these loans seem to be involved in the most inextricable confusion. It is, for instance, difficult to ascertain what is the aggregate indebtedness incurred by local authorities, and it is impossible to discover what steps are being taken to repay the loans which are borrowed. Although it is constantly asserted that these loans are devoted to such reproductive works as the carrying out permanent improvements, yet those who confidently make these assertions have probably seldom taken the trouble to see whether they can be borne out by the published accounts of local authorities. Nothing has been a more fruitful source of financial embarrassment than the appropriation to ordinary revenue of money which is professedly intended to be expended as capital.

An audit of accounts which does not trace the manner in which loans are spent is almost worthless. The accounts of local authorities have rarely been submitted to this ordeal, and until they have been, it will be impossible to know the true position of local finance. But of all the prevalent misconceptions on the subject of local taxation, none is so fruitful of mischievous consequences as one to which allusion has already been made. People are almost forced, by constant reiteration, to believe that the increase in local expenditure is much less serious than it otherwise would be, because the population and wealth of the country are increasing at a much more rapid rate than the expenditure. That this supposition is altogether erroneous, is at once shown by considering some of the statistics of local taxation. The figures about to be quoted refer to the local expenditure of Liverpool since 1841.

It need scarcely be said that the increase in production of wealth, which is so marked a characteristic of the present time, began soon after 1841, and that probably no town in the kingdom has prospered more than Liverpool has by the unprecedented development of commerce and trade which has taken place during the last quarter of a century. In 1841, in the parish of Liverpool, which forms only a part

* I am indebted for these figures, and for many other facts on local taxation, to Mr. R. H. L. Palgrave's useful work on the Local Taxation of Great Britain.

of the borough of Liverpool, the amount raised by rates was £81,733. This amount has steadily increased until, in 1870, it was £300,941. In 1841 the local taxation in the parish of Liverpool represented a charge per head of 7s. 4d. In 1870 this charge had increased to no less a sum than £1 5s. 3d.

The rates have not grown in the same proportion; their growth, however, is sufficient to excite serious alarm. In 1841 the rates in this parish were 2s. 8½d. in the pound; in 1851 they were 3s. 4d.; in 1860, 3s. 9½d.; and in 1871, 4s. 5½d.

The theory that the increase of local expenditure is only proportionate to the increase in wealth and population, is completely disproved by the figures just quoted; for they show that, in one of the wealthiest and most thriving towns in the kingdom, the charge which local taxation imposes upon each inhabitant has increased in thirty years 340 per cent., and that the rate imposed upon all the property assessed has in the same period increased 75 per cent. It may perhaps be thought that the parish of Liverpool exhibits exceptionally unfavourable results. The reverse, however, is the case, as will be seen from the following remarkable figures, which describe the growth of local taxation and local expenditure in the townships which compose the borough and suburbs of Liverpool.

In the hundred of West Derby the rates have advanced in this period from 1s. 7d. in the pound to 5s. 4d.; in Everton they now amount to 6s. 1½d. in the pound; and in Kirkdale they are 6s. 6½d.

In order to make this picture of increasing financial burdens complete, it remains to mention that the debt of Liverpool has increased in this period more than 360 per cent.—namely, from £1,212,192 to £4,363,070. As it may be thought that such extraordinary figures warrant a supposition of some inaccuracy, it may be well to state that they are quoted on the authority of Mr. Rathbone, who, as one of the representatives of the town, would be certainly not likely to depict her financial position in too gloomy colours. I shall presently have occasion again to refer to these figures, but it is perhaps desirable to dwell for a moment or two on some of the reflections which they suggest.

It may be asked what will be the consequences if that which has taken place during the last thirty years is to be continued during the next thirty years. Local taxation will then impose upon each inhabitant a charge of more than £4 per head, and the rates will be not less in the West Derby hundred than 17s. in the pound. It will no doubt be said that these are hypothetical conclusions, impossible of realisation. But where are we to look for an effective resistance to that increasing expenditure which, as we have seen, has been during the last thirty years advancing with sure and steady steps? To look for any effective resistance at the

present time, when there is not only increased taxation, but increased borrowing, is about as reasonable as to suppose that a fire can be extinguished by pouring oil on the flames. What does this increase of local indebtedness show? That, great as has been the increase in local burdens, still the revenue has been insufficient to meet the expenditure.

Although in some of the townships which compose the borough of Liverpool the rates are no less than 6s. in the pound, yet side-by-side with this onerous taxation an increased liability, or in other words augmented rates, are being stored up for the future. The present system of local expenditure, which leads not only to increased taxation, but also to increased borrowing, is often defended on the ground that no inconsiderable portion of the money which has been expended, has been devoted to permanent works, and therefore the outlay once made will not have to be repeated. But considering that this growth of local expenditure has been continuing unchecked during the last thirty years, is it reasonable to suppose that it will be arrested, unless the system of administration under which it has been sanctioned and developed is fundamentally changed? As will be presently more fully shown, the existing system of local government seems especially devised to weaken some of the most effective securities for economy, and to destroy the guarantees of administrative efficiency.

It was not long since stated, by the head of our Local Government Department, that "there is a chaos as regards authorities, a chaos as regards rates, and a worse chaos than all as regards areas of taxation. And not only that, but every different form of collection which it is possible to conceive is employed by the various local authorities administering these various areas."

That this description is in no way exaggerated, is abundantly shown by such facts as the following:—In country districts there are usually three areas of rating—petty sessional divisions, highway districts, and poor-law unions. These, instead of being coincident, often overlap each other so as to produce such inextricable confusion that the Sanitary Commission, in its report of 1870, declared that the result is "the maximum of embarrassment and waste of local government, and the utmost loss of means and effectiveness." In towns the state of things is worse, if possible, than in the country.

It usually happens, for instance, that there are in boroughs three separate rating authorities—viz., the board of guardians, the town council, and the local board of health. To these recent legislation has added a fourth, for the recently constituted school boards have the power to levy rates. County magistrates also levy rates for county purposes from a town population.

UNFINISHED STILL.



"KNITTED A BABY'S BOOT."

A BABY'S boot, and a skein of wool,
 Faded and soiled and soft :
 Odd things, you say, and I doubt you're right,
 Round a seaman's neck this stormy night,
 Up in the yards aloft.

VOL. VII—NEW SERIES.

Most like it's folly ; but, mate, look here—
 When first I went to sea
 A woman stood on yon far-off strand,
 With a wedding-ring on the small soft hand
 Which clung so close to me.

My wife—God bless her ! The day before,
 She sat beside my foot ;
 And the sunlight kissed her yellow hair,
 And the dainty fingers, deft and fair,
 Knitted a baby's boot.

The voyage was over : I came ashore :
 What, think you, found I there ?

A grave the daisies had sprinkled white,
 A cottage empty and dark as night,
 And this beside the chair.

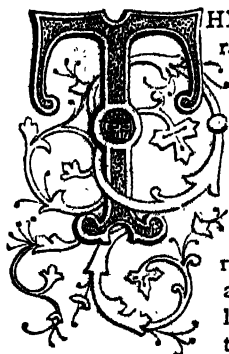
The little boot, 'twas unfinished still,
 The tangled skein lay near ;
 But the knitter had gone away to rest,
 With the babe asleep on her quiet breast,
 Down in the churchyard drear.

THEO. GIFT.

LOCAL TAXATION.

BY HENRY FAWCETT, M.P.

IN TWO PARTS.—PART THE SECOND.



THESE various authorities levy rates at different times, by different sets of officials, and often by different methods of assessment. In many places it happens that the town council attends to the police, appoints various committees, levies a borough rate, manages the water-works, and levies a water rate. The local board of health manages the roads, levies rates for their

maintenance and for all sanitary matters. Sometimes it happens that when the water-works and the gas-works are owned by the municipality, the one is managed by the town council and the other by the local board of health. It will scarcely be believed that the town council and the local board of health are composed of exactly the same persons. They are, in fact, the same body under two different names. It is easy to imagine how innumerable are the complications which are thus unnecessarily created, when it is remembered that the result of giving this body two different names is that rates are collected by different sets of officials at different times. The borough rate, which is levied by the town council, is in some cases paid out of the poor rate, which is levied under the authority of the board of guardians. Other rates—such, for instance, as the cemetery rate, and a contribution to the county lunatic asylum—are paid out of the poor rate. The board of health levy a general district rate and a lighting rate. The general district rate is levied, like all rates under the Public Health Act, with an exemption of 75 per cent. in favour of market gardens and railways. These exemptions do not apply either to the borough rate or to the poor rate.

Instead of the system being improved, additional complexity is constantly being accumulated upon it. Nothing has been a more striking characteristic of the legislation of recent years, than the rapidity with which new rates have been called into

existence. From time to time various schemes are favoured by the public for effecting reforms in the social condition of the people. Each of these schemes, as it obtains legislative sanction, too frequently leaves its mark on the country in the creation of a new rate. Thus in a comparatively few years Parliament has called into existence the following new rates :—Burial Board Rate, Public Library and Museum Rate, General District Rate, Sewerage Rate, Parish Improvement Rate, Animals Contagious Diseases Rate, Borough Lunatic Asylum Rate, Borough Library and Museum Rate, Borough Baths and Wash-houses Rate, Borough Improvement Rate, Borough Burial Board Rate.

Allusion has already been made to the fact that since the passing of the Elementary Education Act, in 1870, a considerable portion of the expense of educating the people will be thrown upon the rates. It would be out of place here to consider a school rate from an educational point of view, but it is necessary to refer to it so far as it affects the question of local taxation. Not only is it probable that the school rate will in many places immediately make a considerable addition to local burdens, but there is too much reason to fear that education will in the future entail much heavier charges upon local and imperial funds. A party, increasing in numbers and influence, is pressing with increasing urgency a demand for free education. If the principle of gratuitous instruction for the people is conceded, it is impossible to assign any limits to the requisite expenditure.

General free education will then follow as a natural consequence, because if the workman earning three pounds a week has the schooling of his children paid for, will it be possible to refuse the same privilege to the small tradesman, to the poor clerk, or to half-pay officers, clergymen, and others who have to keep up a respectable appearance on an income not larger than that earned by many a skilled mechanic ? It is, moreover, important to bear in mind that this demand for free education is simply one offshoot of a sentiment which seems

destined to exercise a rapidly extending influence. Scarcely any one can fail to be struck with the growing tendency which there now is to support various proposals, all based upon the principle that an individual should be able to look to the general community for such pecuniary assistance as will enable him to gratify many tastes and satisfy many wants. Free education would enable a parent to make others pay for that instruction which has now been declared to be necessary to a child. By State emigration it would be possible for a man to throw upon others the cost of his settling in another country. The boarding-out system, which has lately been engrafted on our poor law, gives to every one who is willing to desert his children an assurance that they will be carefully tended in healthy country homes, and will enjoy many more comforts than the majority of working men are able to secure for their families.

There is scarcely a single subject now discussed by the public, with which there is not sure to be associated some scheme that will necessitate an increase either of local or imperial taxation. To take one illustration: it is now each day repeated that the land question is rapidly coming to the front, and that legislation in connection with it is imperatively needed. The legislative measures which are advocated by some of the most able and most active of land reformers could not be carried out, unless pecuniary aid on a very large scale were obtained either from local or imperial revenues. Thus it is proposed, in order to give labour an adequate interest in the cultivation of the soil, that the State or municipalities should purchase land, and either let it to co-operative associations, or parcel it out in small holdings with a view to its being occupied by individual labourers.

It is further said that, as little capital is possessed by labourers, it would be necessary, in order to give these reforms in the tenure of land a fair chance of success, that the State or municipalities should advance to these co-operative associations, or to these small tenants, the capital requisite for the proper cultivation of the land. Even if the scheme should prove ultimately successful, the large outlay that would have in the first instance to be incurred, would constitute a very considerable addition either to local or to imperial taxation. Moreover, those who obtained these advances of capital would be unable to give any adequate security for their repayment. If such security were forthcoming, the capital could be borrowed in the ordinary way of business, and it would therefore be not necessary to seek aid either from the State or from the municipality. The pecuniary sacrifice involved in advancing capital without adequate security would have to be borne by the general community whose contributions create the revenue of the State or of the municipalities.

These demands are, no doubt, powerfully encouraged by the feeling so widely prevalent, that in a country where wealth is accumulated with such great rapidity as in England, neither harm nor peril can result from an increase in expenditure. It therefore becomes of great importance to say a few words on this particular point.

Reverting in the first place to some of the statistics already quoted in reference to Liverpool, it will be seen that even in that town, which has certainly been one of the most prosperous in the kingdom, local expenditure has far more than kept pace with the remarkable growth both of her wealth and population. Not only has each inhabitant to contribute a much larger sum than formerly, but property has to bear a much heavier aggregate rate. It will no doubt be urged that, as the town has become much wealthier, the contribution of £1 5s., which is now levied from each inhabitant, does not represent so great a sacrifice as the contribution of 7s. paid in 1841. It is not, however, difficult to show that such an argument is entirely erroneous, and is calculated to produce very mischievous consequences. In order to prove this it is only necessary to remember that, even in the most prosperous towns, there are sure to be found thousands whose condition is one of extreme poverty. The vast accumulation of wealth, which is so striking a characteristic of the present time, does not unfortunately exert any perceptible influence in diminishing the number of those who live in squalor and destitution. Any one who knows the social condition of such a town as Liverpool, must have this conclusion forced upon him, that there may be the most rapid extension of trade, and yet side by side with all these evidences of material prosperity, there will be a countless number living just on the verge of pauperism.

When such facts as these are borne in mind, such a growth of local expenditure as is observed at Liverpool at once suggests some most serious reflections, and cannot be passed lightly by, as if it were a natural and harmless accompaniment of advancing prosperity. Experience has so clearly shown what are the most fruitful sources of poverty, that it is now looked upon simply as the repetition of a truism to assert that pauperism begets pauperism. When, therefore, it is found that one of the chief reasons why local expenditure increases is that each year a greater amount has to be spent in the maintenance of paupers, are there not some valid grounds for the supposition that pauperism is fostered by the aid it receives, and that the greater the sum spent in parochial relief, the greater is the sum which will be required to be spent in future years? Considered from this point of view, I believe it can be shown that, as a falling stone obtains increased momentum, so does each augmentation in local expenditure indicate

that the movement has gathered an additional impetus, which will necessitate a still greater expenditure in future years.

But this is not the only way in which the movement gathers strength. I have already referred to the fact that wherever paupers are to be found, there are sure to be at least an equal number, and probably a far greater number, living just on the verge of pauperism. Nothing can be more erroneous than to assume that there is a marked difference in the pecuniary resources of those who are, and those who are not, in the receipt of parochial relief. The addition which is sure to be made in the number of paupers by any adverse circumstance, such as a depression in trade or scarcity of food, affords indisputable evidence that the struggle which thousands are carrying on to resist the necessity of claiming relief from the parish is so close and so severe, that the issue of the contest may be determined by some circumstance, the influence of which may at first appear to be but trifling.

The balance between dependence and independence is so nicely adjusted that the weight of a hair is sufficient to turn the scale. It will, in fact, be scarcely disputed by any who are practically acquainted with the present condition of our poor, that each addition made to the rates weakens the force of resistance of those who are carrying on the struggle to which we have just referred; and consequently as rates increase the number of paupers is sure to increase. This, therefore, suggests one of the most serious considerations connected with the growth of local expenditure, for it shows that unless some agencies can be brought into operation to exercise an economising influence, a large expenditure at the present time will create a necessity for a still larger expenditure in the future. Many agencies may, no doubt, be brought into operation not only to diminish the present local expenditure, but also to prevent its increase in the future. Reference has already been made to the importance of consolidating the various rates, and introducing more concentration into local administration. The necessity has also been insisted upon of most carefully guarding against the tendency which there now is to make new demands upon local funds. Before proceeding further, however, it is desirable to say a few words upon various proposals which are now receiving much support, the effect of which I believe would be, not to promote greater economy, but to produce greater extravagance in local expenditure.

From time to time it is proposed to transfer various charges from local to imperial funds. There are many, for instance, who advocate a national poor rate, and the House of Commons last year affirmed by a large majority that a considerable portion of the cost of maintaining lunatics and the police should be borne by the Consolidated Fund.

Such proposals as these obviously suggest two

distinct sets of considerations—viz., those which are political and those which are financial. It would, of course, be inappropriate to discuss the subject here in its political aspect. Upon this branch of the question I will therefore simply remark that a transfer of charges from local to imperial funds would inevitably weaken the principle of local self-government. The money which is provided by the State ought, of course, to be administered by the State, and not by local authorities. The principle of local self-government has done so much to diffuse amongst the people a spirit of self-reliance, that it behoves us to resist with the utmost firmness the introduction of any centralising tendency. It is, however, not difficult to show from purely financial considerations the grave peril which would be incurred if sanction were given to demands that are now constantly being made, to transfer various charges from local rates to the Consolidated Fund. No device that can be imagined would more effectually weaken all the guarantees for economy. Each locality is interested in economy when it is known that the locality will have to bear the burden of any outlay which may be incurred. But when public money is to be spent there is a regular scramble for it, and each town and each district thinks that it is directly benefited by getting the largest share possible of this money.

There is the broadest distinction in the world between economy in the abstract and the concrete. A candidate seeking the suffrages of a constituency may be applauded to the echo by pledging himself in favour of the most rigid frugality in the expenditure of public money, and at the same time it is only too notorious that this enthusiasm would not be forfeited, but would on the contrary be greatly increased, if he should afterwards exert himself to obtain for this same constituency a grant of public money to be squandered in some perfectly useless undertaking. Experience more and more confirms in me the conviction that the great bulk of the people think that money can be taken out of the Consolidated Fund just in the same way as water is drawn from a perennial fountain; the stream ceaselessly flows, and requires no labour and no sacrifice to replenish it. When, however, it is remembered that the Consolidated Fund, far from being this fountain of wealth, never obtains a shilling which is not taken out of the taxpayer's pocket, it at once becomes evident that the transfer to this fund of local charges would, by leading to greater expenditure, not lessen the aggregate burden of taxation.

As a striking instance of the inconsiderateness of many of the opinions which are propounded in reference to taxation, it may be mentioned that those who urgently demand the transfer of local charges to the Consolidated Fund, simultaneously display an equal eagerness for a "free breakfast table," and for the unconditional repeal of the income tax. It

is not for us to decide whether those who support such ideas are themselves the victims of a delusion, or intentionally try to delude the people by propagating amongst them so palpable a fallacy. It might be thought that a moment's reflection would suffice to show that if £2,000,000 of local charges are transferred to the Consolidated Fund, this fund

would have to be increased. The money will not be rained down from heaven. There is one way only by which it can be obtained, and that is by increased taxation. But if taxation is to be increased, direct taxes, such as the income tax, must be augmented, or indirect taxes, such as taxes on commodities, must be made to yield more to the State revenue.

MARY'S DREAM.

IN TWO CHAPTERS.—CHAPTER THE SECOND.



THREE weeks more and I was in Canada. New scenes, new hopes, and hard but very interesting work had nearly restored my good spirits. Looking back to the week I had passed at Beech Hill, I saw plainly that, as regarded Mary, no obstacle would be thrown in the way of my making her my wife, if I only conducted myself well and got on during the next two years. If I continued in favour with the engineer to whose staff I was at present attached, I had good hopes of obtaining ultimately a permanent appointment.

Affairs on the whole looked very hopeful, but I will not say I did not occasionally feel a little aching of the heart, a little longing for the faces and the voices I had left in old England, and I believe the whole time I was in Canada Mary was seldom out of my thoughts. I looked forward anxiously for the letter I knew my mother would soon send after me, and at last it came, but ominous—black-edged, and written at Beech Hill.

It told me that my grandfather was dead—the noble old man—the kind old friend we had all loved and admired so much! After a few days' illness, accompanied by but little pain, he fell into a heavy sleep, from which he never awakened. My mother had been summoned to his bed-side on the very day I left England, and had not yet returned home. She told me how quiet and patient my poor grandmother was under her heavy trial, and how good and helpful Mary had been; but her letter was short and written in very depressed spirits. I cannot tell you how shocked and grieved I was, but I wrote immediately both to my mother and Mary, and in a short time an answer came from the latter. It ran thus:—

"DEAR MARK,—I cannot write about this great sorrow which has fallen upon us, but dear grandmamma and I thank you very much for your kind, sympathising letter. We are alone now, for Aunt Mary was obliged to leave us on account of your sister's holidays. The house is so strange and still! Can we ever become reconciled to it? Mrs. Lyton and Jane went last week. We had to get Mr. Leigh to tell them grandmamma must have perfect quiet, which

indeed was a fact. To do them justice, they have been useful in many ways, but it is a relief now they are gone. A few days ago we were sitting together, grandmamma and I; she was knitting, and I had been looking at her, for she looks quite beautiful in her widow's weeds, when she suddenly raised her head and said in her quiet way, 'Mary, fetch me the old Bible.' I knew directly what she wanted it for, and went to fetch it out of the cabinet in her dressing-room, but it was not there; then I looked in your room, and in fact all over the house, but nowhere was it to be found. As the servants said they knew nothing about it, I wrote off to Mrs. Lyton, and received a note from Jane in reply, asking whether I remembered your taking it into your room the first night of your arrival. She wrote as if she were quite offended at my asking them. Aunt Mary says she has never seen it. It is very strange, and has made poor grandmamma quite unhappy. Did you inadvertently put it into your portmanteau? Do write back soon and tell us. You can guess why it is wanted: another name must now be added to those who are gone. I am glad you like your work, dear Mark. Best love from grandmamma and myself.

"Your affectionate Cousin,

"MARY EARNSHAW."

I wrote off immediately to say I had left the Bible in my room and knew nothing more of it; in fact that it was impossible I could *inadvertently* have put so large a book into a small portmanteau. I told her how much I regretted that it was missing, but felt sure it must soon be found.

In time there came another letter from Mary—kind, but I thought a little formal. She said in the postscript that nothing had been heard of the Bible.

Months passed away and, though I had written once or twice, I heard nothing more from my cousin, so I asked my mother to send me a little Beech Hill news.

Her answer annoyed me exceedingly. She told me that the old lady had been much distressed by receiving several anonymous letters. The writer animadverted strongly on my grandfather's will, and called upon his wife to make amends to those who were injured by it out of the small property she had at her own disposal.

My mother said, "You can well imagine how painful such letters are, but the strangest thing about them is that your grandmother is convinced that the person who has written them is in possession of the missing old Bible. One of the letters gives a little bit of family pedigree to prove the writer's acquaintance with the subject, which she says could only have been procured in that way. I wish, dear Mark, the Bible had not been last seen in your possession, for really it makes it very awkward."

"Am I to understand from this," I exclaimed when I had finished the letter, "that they suspect me of stealing the Bible and using it to frighten my old grandmother!" So greatly exasperated was I that I sent off immediately a few indignant lines to my mother, which I requested her to show at Beech Hill, because I should certainly not write there again while I lay under such a shameful imputation.

She tried to soften me down by saying that I had taken an exaggerated view of her letter; of course the whole affair was very puzzling, but she had her own suspicions, which for the present she should keep to herself. My grandmother had been sadly distressed at my note, and Mary had burst into tears.

My mother was evidently much annoyed on my account, though she tried to make light of it to me. I felt however very angry with Mary, and adhered to my determination of not writing. Well, about two months before the time fixed for my return to England, a letter came from Mary. She never alluded to the Bible, and tried to write as if nothing unpleasant had happened; but she was evidently very uncomfortable. At first I felt glad of this, but when I read her letter over again better feelings prevailed, and I longed for the time when I could be with her, to talk it all over and try to discover the mystery. She seemed so lonely and sad; told me of her grandmother's failing health, and that she herself had been under the doctor's hands for some time.

She concluded by saying that they both wished very much to hear from me. Just then I was busy and up the country, but I sent a few lines to tell them of my speedy return to England, and by the next mail received another letter.

"DEAR MARK.—Do not be angry if I again mention the Bible, and do not laugh if I tell you a very curious dream I had about it the very night I wrote my last letter to you. I thought you and I were walking together across a wide field or piece of moorland, for there was grass and heath in flower, and at last we came to a house, and went in to see somebody we knew, but I don't know who. We walked into a parlour, a plain old-fashioned room, with chairs against the walls. On the side opposite the door was a table covered with a green cloth, and on that table was *the Bible*. You will say there was nothing extraordinary in dreaming about a thing one had puzzled over so much, but all was so vivid and like reality. I told grand-mamma and described the room exactly, and she said she seemed to remember having seen a place like it. Well, a night or two ago I dreamt it all over again, and I feel convinced that wherever that room may be, the Bible is. Grandmamma wants you to come to us as soon as ever you can after your return to England," etc. etc.

I made up my mind to answer this verbally, and a few weeks more saw me on my way home.

It was again the pleasant month of June when I steamed up the Mersey, and was met and warmly welcomed by my father on the landing-stage. I had much to hear and tell as we proceeded homewards, and happily the latter was of such a description as to please those who cared for me, for I had done well, and received the promise of an excellent appointment in the Midland counties, far better in-

deed than a young man of my age could have expected. A tribe of young brothers and sisters were waiting for me at the station, and I was escorted home in triumph.

At the hall door stood my mother, who kissed me much and cried over me a little, and then a white hand was held out to me, and a quiet pathetic voice said, "How do you do, Mark?"

It was my cousin Mary. What a bound my heart gave, and how the blood rushed to my face when I saw her! The calm dignity tempered with kindness with which I had determined to meet her was certainly strikingly absent from my demeanour. There was a shout of laughter from the young ones, and then my mother explained that one of Mary's sisters had taken her place at Beech Hill, while she had change of air and scene, which the doctor said she much needed. I was grieved to see her looking so thin and delicate, but I thought her, if possible, prettier and more lovable than before.

While we were partaking of our substantial meat tea, my father told me of a scheme he had devised for the benefit of my mother and Mary, and which they had only waited for my return to carry out. This was a fortnight's tour through Derbys-hire, in which, as he was unable to leave home, I was to be their escort. It was my grandmother's native county, but my mother had not visited it since she was a child.

After the younger ones were in bed, we sat and had a quiet chat by the open window. I noticed the care they all took of my cousin, the warm shawl brought for her, and the easy-chair in which she was ensconced, and feared she must be very unwell. When she went into the hall for her bed-candle, I followed her and said—

"Ah, Mary—did you keep your promise?"

Her lip quivered, and she did not answer. I could not help an upbraiding look, but at the same time I pressed her hand warmly enough to show I was not unforgiving. I said no more, and made up my mind not to do so until I had been completely exonerated about *the Bible*.

Not the least delightful part of a journey are the antecedents—I mean, of course, a trip where the object is pleasure—the searching in guide-books and topographical dictionaries, even the packing up, and the inevitable Bradshaw. Great were my mother's cares, and wonderful her arrangements and provisions against every imaginable contingency during her absence. My father said truly that the sooner we were off the better, or she would be quite worn out. Mary was not allowed to exert herself, but she was quietly busy, and, I thought, looked better and happier than the evening before.

At last we set off, and our first destination was the old Izaak Walton Inn, at Dovedale. There we spent three or four days very happily. My mother, who was a poor walker, would sit for hours with her

knitting in her hand, gazing dreamily at the fretful impetuous little river, dashing, leaping, and eddying over its rocky bed, while Mary and I explored in every direction the beautiful grotesque valley, so loved by the pleasant old fisherman who once dwelt beside it.

From thence we proceeded to Matlock, saw Chatsworth and brave old Haddon Hall, and so on to the wild and desolate grandeur of the Peak. By this time my mother looked ten years younger, and the blush-roses had returned to Mary's cheeks, and she was bright and happy again. Our trip was nearly over, but one, to me most unpleasant, little duty remained to be performed, and therefore we stayed at the town of C—, about two miles from which Mrs. Lyton lived with her daughter.

They occupied, rent-free, an old house belonging to my grandmother, and as they had lately made many complaints of its want of repair, she was anxious we should see for ourselves what it required, and also—dear old soul!—show a little attention and kindness to those who, as she always remarked, “had seen a good deal of trouble.”

After breakfast my mother suggested that we young people should walk over to Mrs. Lyton's, and bring them back with us to luncheon; she, being rather overtired, would stay quietly in the pretty shady little garden belonging to the hotel. We laughed at her for what we called her duplicity, and at last with sundry wry faces started on our errand.

Following our landlord's directions, we crossed several fields and then entered a pleasant lane with steep banks on either side, here and there completely overarched by trees. All this time we were gradually ascending, and at last emerging on a wide strip of moorland, made for a white church-spire in the distance, which we had been told to look out for as a landmark. I gave Mary my arm, for she was tired, and we walked leisurely on, enjoying the mountain air, the scent of the grass, and all the pleasant sights and sounds of a summer morning. At last I said—

“You are very quiet, Mary.”

“I feel puzzled,” she replied. “Can I have been this way before? Everything seems familiar to me.”

“It is only that odd sensation,” I returned, “which sometimes comes over one, of having heard, seen, or done the same thing before. The belief in the transmigration of souls must have arisen from it, I think.”

“Well, Mark,” said Mary earnestly, “in some state of existence I *must* have been here before.”

By this time we had crossed the heath and reached the village. A child standing by the gate of the first house told us it was Mrs. Lyton's, so we entered. A narrow walk between two high holly hedges took us to the front door, which was wide open, and finding neither bell nor knocker, we

walked straight in, and passing through another open door, found ourselves in the presence of the occupants. Mrs. Lyton started up hastily with an exclamation of surprise, and Jane threw a dress at which she was working on a table at the end of the room. The warmth with which they greeted us was greater than usual, but I did not think it genuine; and Mary's behaviour quite puzzled me, she looked so absent and bewildered, and as if she hardly knew what she was saying. I did most of the talking—told them about my homeward voyage, and the trip we had been taking, and was just coming to the invitation, when Mary made me start by remarking abruptly—

“I must have been here before, Mrs. Lyton.”

“I think you may have been when you were a baby in arms,” she replied, “but you couldn't possibly remember it.”

“It was not then, it was since,” replied Mary, looking still more puzzled.—“Mark, I remember now; it was in my dream; that is the table, and here,” she said, suddenly crossing the room and lifting up the dress, “is our old Bible!”

Yes, there it was, sure enough, and you can imagine our various sensations at the discovery, and the countenances of the delinquents, who made very lame attempts to account for its presence. Mary said nothing more, good, bad, nor indifferent, and in the midst of utter stagnation I rose, wished them good-bye, and departed with the Bible under my arm.

We had re-crossed the heath and entered the lane before either of us spoke, and then I said—

“Now, Miss Mary, you and I must have it out.”

“I want to talk to you about it, Mark, very much,” she answered.

“Very well, then, I will first state the case to you. A young fellow loves a girl very much, but he is compelled to go abroad. When there he works early and late to win her, and never has a thought about her that is not loving and true. In the meantime the young lady stays at home, and, although she has allowed this young fellow to hope that his love is not unacceptable, listens to gossips and back-biters, and arrives at last at the conclusion that he is untruthful, dishonest, and ungrateful to a degree.”

“Don't, Mark!” said Mary, bursting into tears, “you are too cruel, a great deal too cruel. If a suspicion was ever forced upon me, it soon passed away, and I have been wretched about it. I never thought you what you say. If I had, do you think I would be here with you now?”

She cried silently for a minute or two and then went on—

“When the housemaid was asked about it, she said the Bible was in your room the evening before you left, and was *not* there when she went to sweep the room immediately after you were gone. She

thought you had borrowed it. Oh, those detestable women, what mischief they have made!" And stopping at a gate by the side of the lane, she leaned against it and sobbed as though her heart would break.

I could not bear to see her in such trouble, so I put my arm round her waist, and drawing her to me, whispered—

"Polly, the damages to my character were very heavy, and I expect great compensation. Shall I name it at once? You must consent to be my wife."

There was a pause for a minute or two, and then she wiped her eyes, placed her hand in mine, and said quietly—

"I agree, Mark."

Often since has that little scene flashed across my memory. It was but the other day, when

speaking at a crowded meeting on the coal supply of Great Britain, that a waft of wind came in at the open window, and lifted the hair on my forehead, and there it was all before me again—the old gate, with the mountain ash on one side and the tangle of wild roses on the other, the blue sky, the pleasant breezy morning, even the old cow gazing upon us so thoughtfully.

When at last we reached the inn, we saw through the open window my mother sitting reading, and the luncheon ready on the table. I waited in the hall until Mary had taken off her hat, and we entered the room together. I am afraid I startled my mother.

"Well, where are the guests?" said she.

"They are not coming," I answered, "at least I never asked them—but instead, mother darling, here is the lost Bible, and here is my future wife."

E. C.

HESTER MORLEY'S PROMISE.

BY HESBA STRETTON,

AUTHOR OF "THE DOCTOR'S DILEMMA," ETC. ETC.

CHAPTER THE SEVENTH.

GREAT FOLKS.

MR. WALDRON'S Parliamentary duties deprived the church at Little Aston of his presence, and that of his daughter, during a considerable portion of each year.

The church and the minister were perhaps a little more at their ease during their absence; but they felt all the increased importance of their personal attendance at the chapel, and their return was anxiously looked forward to. It had become a point of etiquette for Mr. Watson to proceed at once to Aston Court as soon as the rumour of their arrival reached his ears, in order to congratulate himself and them upon their reunion with the little church of which they were the most conspicuous pillars.

They had come down from London upon the commencement of the long autumnal recess, and Mr. Watson set out the next morning upon his visit of homage. Aston Court was about a mile from Little Aston, but most of the road lay through the fine old park which surrounded the newly-built mansion. Mr. Waldron was a utilitarian, and had sold off the deer which had belonged to the former owner, and divided his park into regular divisions for the grazing of cattle and the growth of hay.

The new house was plain, square, and massive, flanked by two smaller but equally formal wings. The windows of plate-glass were of uniform size, distributed along the front of the building at even distances, and one large entrance-door, with

a portico, stood in the exact centre of the ground-floor. The garden stretching before it was laid out in long, straight borders of the same breadth and length; and the trees separating it from the park were kept well clipped. The ordinary reception-room, which was the dining-room of the mansion, was a large and handsome apartment, but heavy and dull.

Its principal decoration consisted of two life-size portraits of Luther and Melancthon, excellently painted; the former hard, acute, and intrepid; the latter soft and feminine, with mournful blue eyes, which seemed weary of gazing upon life. There was also above the fireplace a richly illuminated and gilded testimonial, signed by a thousand Nonconformists—inscribed to David Waldron, in gratitude for his eminent services in the House of Commons in defence and advancement of the cause of Nonconformity.

The middle of this solemn apartment was filled by a long wide table, similar to those seen in committee-rooms, and covered with dark leather; a number of leather-covered chairs were ranged along the walls. Curtains of deep crimson damask, always drawn a little over the window, shed a solemn light into the room—a twilight which was not mournful gloom, but rather a wealthy and grand obscurity.

It was into this reception-room that the minister was ushered. It was Saturday morning, and on the next day Mr. Waldron and his daughter would occupy the large curtained pew in the corner of the chapel, which was appropriated to their use. Miss

Waldron was seated at the table, a small insignificant person to look at, but the daughter of David Waldron, M.P.

Miss Waldron received her pastor with mingled fervour and condescension, and invited him to a seat beside her. Mr. Waldron soon joined them and a close conversation, a sort of religious gossip, about the affairs of the church and its members ensued.

"Brother Morley is married again, as you know," said Mr. Watson, after some other subjects had

ning her over. We will put her into Miss Waldron's hands."

Miss Waldron was one of those persons who are never called by their Christian names even by their nearest relatives. It is possible that, in conversation with her, her father or her brother might sometimes address her by it; but it was not known beyond her own family circle. There seems something significant in this suppression of the name by which one is enrolled under the banner of the Cross.



"TURNED A BEND IN THE DRIVE."

been discussed, "and he is beginning to feel sorely troubled about his young wife. She remains the same worldly, thoughtless creature she was before her marriage."

"Ay, ay!" answered Mr. Waldron, shaking his head, "we gave in too soon there. You and I, as well as John Morley, were smitten with the young woman's beauty."

"Father!" interrupted Miss Waldron in a tone of reproof.

"It is true," continued Mr. Waldron; "I never felt so checkmated in my life as when she appeared suddenly, in the very midst of our expostulation with John Morley. But we must get her into the church. There must be ways and means of win-

"By what means shall I get at this young woman?" asked Miss Waldron, not at all unwilling to undertake the conversion of Rose Morley, and entering into it as a business.

"I scarcely know," answered Mr. Watson in perplexity.

"There is my Sunday-school class," continued Miss Waldron, "and my Mothers' Meeting on Monday, my Wednesday evening Bible Class, and my Saturday night Female Prayer Meeting."

"I am afraid we could not get her to attend any of these," replied the minister.

"Why not?" inquired Miss Waldron.

"She is quite an educated person," he said timidly, "and has all the manners of a lady. She

has been a governess, and plays very well, and can draw. She holds herself rather above the rest of our people. They are a little unpolished, you know."

"I do not see then what can be done in such a case," said Miss Waldron, with a stiff and chilly air.

"I recollect," said Mr. Waldron, "she has a good deal the manner of a lady; and very pretty she is too. John Morley has a sweet-looking little girl by his first wife; I like to see that child in chapel. Miss Waldron, I think your only way of getting at her will be to call upon her. You might invite her to return your call. It would do you no harm, and, under God's blessing, might do her a great deal of good."

Miss Waldron mused with an impenetrable face.

"Do, my dear young lady," urged the minister eagerly, seeing a possible avenue by which Gospel influences might reach Rose Morley's benighted soul; "your rank and position would give you consequence in her eyes; she is a girl to be touched by them."

"Mr. Watson," she said with some severity, "we belong to different spheres altogether."

"I know you do," he hastened to say.

"And," she continued, lifting her hand to enjoin silence while she finished speaking, "there would be a danger of fostering her pride; but I will be on my guard against that. I do not desire to shrink from any cross, and I will call upon her. What else can be done for her soul may occur to me; and it is possible I may go so far as to invite her here for conversation with me upon her spiritual welfare. But that is in the future. For the present you may leave the young person in my hands."

Mr. Watson bowed, and thought it would be judicious to say no more upon this subject.

"Your son," he said in a hesitating and deprecating tone, as if anxious to express his interest in him, yet doubtful how the great man would take it, "is all well with Mr. Robert Waldron?"

The father's face clouded at the mention of this name, but there was no anger against the timorous minister in his reply.

"No, no, my friend," he answered frankly. "I did wrong in sending my boy to Eton and Oxford. There never was a more hopeful lad, full of good intentions and desires, before he went from home. There were as many signs of grace in him as in Miss Waldron; but the saying is fulfilled, 'One shall be taken and the other left.' Yet in part, if not altogether, it is my sin."

"It will be all well with him yet," said the minister in a gentle tone of encouragement; "our prayers will not be unanswered, though the answer carry. Is he with you?"

"We expect him, but only for a few days," said

Mr. Waldron; "our household ways are too strict for him, and his habits are such as I cannot tolerate under my roof. Yet he is only gay, not vicious, I trust. But let us talk about something else; my son is no pleasant theme to me."

About an hour later, Mr. Watson, passing by John Morley's shop, looked in for a few minutes to announce to him the arrival of the Waldrons, and their expected appearance at chapel the next day—intelligence which made so much impression upon John Morley, that he remembered to repeat it to his young wife, as she sat moping and dull at the tea-table.

It came as a little gleam of light from the outer world, and the effect produced by it would have been astounding to the abstracted husband, could he have been made aware of it. Rose had retained a lively impression of the great man whom she had seen and spoken to before her marriage; and she had often cast furtive glances at his large, empty pew in the chapel, to which she accompanied her husband twice every Sunday.

Mr. Waldron was by far the greatest man she had ever seen.

The next morning Rose made a very careful and elaborate toilet; and even John Morley, in the midst of his anxious Sabbath thoughts of her as one still upon the brink of eternal peril, could not check the pleasant and flattering admiration which her beauty produced in him. He felt inclined to believe against all reason and revelation, that she was too fair to be doomed to any misery either in this world or the world to come. With her hand resting on his arm, he walked proudly up the old street.

The close carriage from Aston Court passed them by, and both he and Rose caught the eye and the hurried salutation of the great Mr. Waldron from his seat beside his daughter, who looked neither to the right hand nor to the left.

The chapel was better filled than usual, and the minister preached with more than usual animation.

At the end of the service, while all the congregation were standing up, but hanging back till the owners of Aston Court should take their departure, Mr. Waldron presented Mrs. Morley to his daughter, and said, in a voice loud enough to be heard half through the place, "Miss Waldron intends to call upon you at half-past eleven o'clock precisely on Tuesday morning next."

CHAPTER THE EIGHTH.

MISS WALDRON.

AT half-past eleven o'clock precisely on Tuesday morning, Miss Waldron, attired in a gown of some dark brown stuff, with a brown bonnet and shawl to match, opened the door of John Morley's shop with such a jerk as to set the little bell tinkling furiously.

The summons caused Mrs. Morley to jump up nervously, in her costly and tasty drawing-room on the floor above. She had dressed herself and Hester in very becoming and very light morning dresses of a pale tint, which would not have been unfit for the handsomest room in Aston Court; and, thus prepared, she awaited the announcement of her distinguished visitor. But Miss Waldron positively declined to penetrate farther into a tradesman's abode than the room which opened out of the shop. It was only because a religious conversation might be liable to interruption in the shop itself, that she did not insist upon Mrs. Morley receiving her call there, as a protest against the wild supposition that there was anything like equality between them. But Miss Waldron had taken up her cross this morning, and was willing to bear it even into John Morley's back parlour.

Rose entered the dark, dull room to which she had been summoned with a pretty bashfulness, half matronly and half girlish; and Miss Waldron met her with an awkward embarrassment, for fear of this young person feeling too free with her. When the first stiff courtesies had been exchanged, Miss Waldron took her seat uncomfortably upon the edge of a chair, and looked steadily, almost sternly, into the smiling face of Rose Morley.

"I have called upon you," she said in an exhortatory voice, "at the united request of my father, who is a deacon, and Mr. Watson, who is the pastor of the church at Little Aston. They desired me to see if anything could be done for you. You do not attend any of my meetings, so I have come to see you here."

"I did not know that you had any meetings," answered Rose apologetically, "but I do not think I should feel at home in any of them. I was not brought up to going to chapel."

She spoke nervously, and seemed on the verge of shedding tears. Miss Waldron felt satisfied that her very first words had made an impression upon this frivolous object of Mr. Watson's pastoral solicitude.

"Ah!" she said, "you were brought up in the darkness of the Establishment; but now you are brought to the light, you ought to love the light. A very eminent minister told me that, by my birth and rank, I am set as a candle upon a candlestick, and not put in a secret place, or under a bushel, that they which come in may see the light."

She paused, and looked down into her satchel with a sigh, as if exhausted with shining too brilliantly; while Rose, puzzled and shy, could not think of anything to say in response; and Hester, from her usual seat in the old arm-chair, listened, and looked inquisitively at their visitor.

"Ah! my dear young—" she was about to say "person," but her eyes fell upon Rose's sweet face and elegant dress, and she checked herself, leaving a blank in her address—"I came here to-day, not out of idle compliment to you or your husband, but to awaken you to the danger of your condition. It has been well said that we who have the bread of life should not only invite our fellow-sinners to partake, but should carry it to them, and compel them to eat. You are perishing, you are famishing before my eyes for lack of food, and I must force you to take from my hands what will save you. It is a necessity which is laid upon me."

Rose's trouble and perplexity were increased indefinitely by this speech, and she looked from Miss Waldron to Hester, and back again to Miss Waldron.

"I scarcely understand," she said, blushing deeply; "you know I have always lived among Church people, and I never heard any one talk in this manner before. I am sure you are very kind, but I don't understand clearly about the bread and the light. I have been confirmed, and I used to take the sacrament sometimes—always at Christmas and Easter. I am very stupid, I know, but I scarcely understand you."

"Do you feel no unsatisfied cravings of your immortal soul?" asked Miss Waldron.

"I don't know," answered Rose, with increasing shamefacedness; "there are a good many things I am not satisfied with. We never have any friends to come in and see us, and we never go out anywhere except to Mr. Watson's. I expected to be a great deal happier and more free when I was married, but it is not so. Mr. Morley has no taste for company, and I am shut up here day after day, till I feel more lonely than I could tell you."

"But do you not feel the load of your sins?" pursued Miss Waldron.

"I'm sure I'm not very sinful," she said, pouting a little; "I'm not idle, or ill-tempered, or cross. Little Hetty knows that. Oh, no! Miss Waldron, I don't break the Sabbath, or steal, or kill, or—or anything else that breaks the Commandments. No, if I had any sins I would own them. But I am only silly. Yes, I know I am not the clever person Mr. Morley thought me before he married me; and he is disappointed, and I am very dull. I could not bear it but for little Hetty.—Little Hetty, my darling, come and kiss me this minute."

In the presence of this strange visitant, who eyed her so coldly and rigidly, the poor, silly little soul of Rose Morley felt a sudden need of having the warm arms of the child round her neck, and her fond young lips pressed to her mouth. Hester slipped down from her chair, and kissed her step-mother affectionately; then standing beside

her, she turned her face towards Miss Waldron.

"Indeed she does not understand," she said, quaintly and confidentially; "we two have talked about it often and often, and she does not feel like being a very great sinner. *We* know we are, because we've been taught it over and over again; but she does not. If we hadn't been taught it so often, we shouldn't have believed it all in a minute. You wouldn't believe you were the chief of sinners if nobody had taught you so, would you?"

A dull red flush suffused Miss Waldron's cheek and brow as she listened to Hester's explanation of her step-mother's benighted state. She could not meet the clear frank gaze of the child.

"I was once a sinner," she answered, "when I was a little girl like you; but I became a member of the church before I was much older than you are. Ever since I have had one single object in life—the good of my fellow-creatures."

She remained silent for a minute or two, with closed eyelids; while Hester, stroking her step-mother's hand gently, looked with a child's steady gaze into Miss Waldron's face. Rose Morley felt more bewildered and embarrassed than ever, and dismissed from her mind all idea of offering her guest any refreshment.

"I am going now to my tract district," said Miss Waldron, recalling herself to the present moment. "I trust you will think over seriously what I have said to you: and may the thorns not choke the good seed. Yours is a very interesting case. I have here a small book, written by myself, which gives an account of a young woman who died of a broken heart, but whom I visited on her death-bed, and brought to repentance. I will present it to you, Mrs. Morley. I am about to order a book from your husband, which you can bring down to Aston Court yourself, when it arrives. It will be a nice walk for you and Hester; and we can converse again upon this subject. I am always at home till eleven o'clock in the morning, for I employ two hours after breakfast in reading and meditation."

She rose to take her leave, offering her hand condescendingly to Mrs. Morley, who was in a flutter of amazement and timidity. If there was any doubt as to Rose's silliness, there could be none as to the sweetness of her temper. She could put a little, and she lost her buoyancy in the dull atmosphere of her new home; but there was no canker of ill-humour or pride in her nature. She was quite unconscious of any impertinence in her visitor, and was perfectly willing to carry anything down to Aston Court for her. In her simple heart she gave Miss Waldron credit for being as saintly as she claimed to be: and with a real hope that she might find in her a guide and friend, who would make clear to her the mysteries of her hus-

band's creed, she looked forward eagerly to the opportunity of meeting with her again.

CHAPTER THE NINTH.

A LITTLE RIFT.

WHETHER Hester or Rose Morley felt the most childish pleasure in the prospect of a visit to Aston Court it would be difficult to say. The latter, with her sweet temper and imperturbable self-complacency, could not be sensitive to any impertinence which did not take the form of an open insult; so that she looked forward with delight to the moment she would find herself received upon any terms in the mansion of Mr. Waldron. Hester had been there two or three times at the annual treat of the Sunday scholars, and her imagination had been struck with the larger dimension and greater magnificence of the house as compared with her own home, which she so rarely quitted.

The memorable morning came—a soft morning towards the end of September, with a fine and tender film of mist hanging about the autumnal trees, and hiding the distant prospect. Already the dark green of the foliage, which had grown almost sombre with the summer's sultry heat, was beginning to brighten with the tints of autumn.

A thick, fine dew spangled the grass.

The dense heavy shadows cast by the trees were less clear and sharp than when the sun had shone through a drier atmosphere. There was a brisker activity among the birds, that no longer screened themselves from the heat among the innumerable leaves, but fluttered busily about; while the rooks, from their rookery amidst the trees which surrounded Aston Court, were winging their way in battalions towards the corn-fields, many of which were already cleared of their harvest sheaves.

Here and there from amongst the short stubble, started up a covey of birds, with a whirr of wings and a swift flight out of danger; while the hares crept timidly along the tall grass, which had shot up again in the rich soil of the park since the hay harvest in June.

To Rose and Hester, coming from the dusty heart of the town, which was nearly as close and crowded as the centre of some populous city, this park was a very Garden of Eden, and they entered it with buoyant steps.

The bright pleasant face of John Morley's young wife had put on its sweetest smile and fairest grace. There was not a line upon it to betray the weariness and growing discontent she felt with her dull life. In fact, she did not feel it dull at that moment, and she was the creature of the moment.

Her husband, and the new home of which she was mistress, were as completely blotted out of her mind

as though they had no existence. The world consisted only of herself, and Hester, and this beautiful park, bathed in the soft light of a September sun. She sang aloud, and blithely, as she trode lightly along the path, with Hester, as happy as herself, tripping at her side.

Suddenly Rose Morley stopped, with an exclamation of surprise, and with a movement as if she were about to take flight: a pretty and graceful movement, which with her heightened colour, and parted lips, lent to her an additional charm, at a moment when an additional charm was not needed.

They had just turned a bend in the drive, which was hidden by a cluster of trees, and came unexpectedly upon a young man, strolling idly along with a gun upon his shoulder. Though he wore a velvet shooting jacket and thick boots, and had no gloves on, he had an air of ease and rank, almost amounting to dignity, which often characterises those who have never been in a dependent position. He was handsome, and his appearance was well-cared-for. His face resembled a little that of Mr. Waldron; but he was only twenty-two years old, and his expression was more self-satisfied and careless than that of the busy great man. It said as plainly as expression could say that he did not like trouble in any guise. His motto would be, "Let us eat and drink, for to-morrow we die."

"Rose!" exclaimed this young man, in an accent of wonder, as he came face to face with Mrs. Morley; and the next instant he stretched out his hands, and caught hers in them, as if to prevent her taking the flight which her movement seemed to threaten.

"Robert! oh, Robert!" she answered, with a bright smile and blush upon the face she lifted up to him, in an attitude of childish and forgetful delight, while he spoke again in quiet and hurried tones.

"Whatever in the wide world brings you here?" he asked, and a fine ear might have detected a slight tone of vexation in his voice: "it is two years since we bade one another farewell for ever at Oxford, and I fancied that you were still there. Are you angry with me yet, Rose? But no; you are too good, too amiable, to be angry long. You were never angry with me, I remember, when my behaviour was worst. Rose, I never met such a dear girl as you."

It seemed to strike him that he had never met with any girl as pretty, for he fastened his eyes upon her face, and his own assumed an air of pleasure and satisfaction.

"Upon my word," he continued, taking one of her gloved hands again in his, "you are prettier than ever, Rose. There is some change in you. What is it? You have lost that little governess primness

I used to tease you about, which never sat well upon your face; and your dress is more tasty than it used to be. Have you come into a fortune? Has that rich uncle you told me of died, and made you his heiress? Tell me what wind has blown you into this part of the country?"

"I am married," said Mrs. Morley, with downcast eyes.

"Married!" repeated the young man, an exclamation which he followed by a low, long whistle that brought his dogs bounding about him, but he kicked them away with something of peevishness and irritation in his manner. "Married, Rose!" he repeated, gazing into her conscious face; "ah! well, we were no more than friends, you remember, and we can be that still. And who is the good man?"

He tried to speak in an easy tone of indifference, but there was an air of chagrin upon his face, which escaped the downcast eyes of Mrs. Morley. She blushed and stammered, but at last was compelled to speak reluctantly.

"He is a very good man," she answered; "his name is John Morley."

"John Morley the bookseller!" ejaculated the stranger. "Why, Rose, where are your old ambitions flown to? Do you forget that two years ago nothing short of some thousands a year would satisfy you, and I had not that to offer you?—I, a poor spendthrift, with a hard-hearted father, and not even an entailed estate, so that he could cut me off with a shilling if he chose. Oh, what fools we were!"

He spoke in tones of mingled mockery and regret, with a smile of bitterness, which it was impossible for Rose to comprehend; for catching the brighter glitter of his eyes, and the curl of his lip, she smiled back again gaily.

"Ah!" she said, with one of her most childish pouts, "but nobody else cared a straw about me, and I might have remained a governess all my life."

"Perhaps so," he answered coldly; "but are you really the Mrs. John Morley I am running away from? Miss Waldron said at breakfast she expected you this morning, and I made haste to take myself off, never thinking—who could think?—that it was my old friend Rose. We were no more than friends, were we? Do you remember our stolen walks together, when everybody believed you were safe in bed? Ah, Rose! you were not made to be a governess."

"No, I was not," she said; "oh! I remember well. But what brings you here, Robert? Are you visiting at Aston Court?"

"Ah!" he said with some embarrassment, "you only knew me as Robert Hall, but my full name is Robert Hall Waldron."

He tried to speak as if it was the most ordinary

thing in the world to suppress one's chief name ; and Rose, who was not critical, accepted the explanation with no other feeling than one of surprise.

"Then you are Mr. Waldron's son!" she exclaimed. "Why! you made me believe he was a shocking, cruel old ogre. Oh, for shame, sir! I have seen him, and spoken to him, and I like him very much; and I am sure, quite sure and certain, that he likes me. He was at our house yesterday, and he would make Mr. Morley call me to speak to him, and he said he should like to see me sometimes at Aston Court, and he hoped Miss Waldron would be my friend. There, now! And you always told me he was such a dreadful, bad, hard-hearted old Turk!"

"Ah, Rose!" said Robert Waldron, "you are the same sweet-tempered creature as ever. I could swear to that gay voice of yours amidst a thousand; so clear, and merry, and sweet. I should like you to speak to me for ever. Do you sing as you used to do? Will you sing for us at Aston Court? It will not be so dull there now you are near us. You must let me come and see you in your own home, or I shall never believe you are married. I cannot feel that you are John Morley's wife."

"But I am," she answered, with a clear little laugh, "and I have a daughter too, Mr. Robert Hall Waldron. This is my very own little daughter, sir—Hester Morley."

He had not been altogether unconscious of the child's presence before, for it had imparted to him a feeling of more ease and freedom in this unexpected meeting with Rose. But now he looked at her more attentively.

The grave and noble face of the eager, sensitive child was full of wonder, which had something of a vague sadness in it; and her large earnest eyes were raised to him with an expression of innocent reproach. He felt in an instant that he had wounded her, and it was no part of his nature to hurt any one intentionally. There was no malice in his temperament. He had spoken perhaps slightly of her father, a slight which Rose had not felt, and he wished to efface the painful impression.

"Hester Morley," he repeated, as if long familiar with the name, "the little girl I have seen sometimes at chapel! Ah! I know you again, you see. Your father is quite a friend of mine, as well as your new mamma. Do you love her very much?"

"Yes, very much," answered Hester earnestly; "and my father loves her dearly as well. We are a great deal happier than we were before."

She spoke with a childish fervour which touched the impressible nature of Robert Waldron, and for a moment made him feel hardly innocent in his interview with John Morley's young wife.

Perhaps it would be better to let this first encounter

be the last. Yet no harm could come of their intercourse, except a little dissatisfaction and discontent on the part of Rose. There had been no positive love-making between them in the old times, but now that she was married, to a tradesman too, she might possibly compare him with her husband, to the disadvantage of the latter. Still he did not quite like to lose sight of an old friend, and his own home was very dull. The decision was too much trouble for him, and he resolved to cast it upon a chance.

If this grave and innocent child gave him permission to enter their secluded home, he would take it as a sign that no harm could come of it. He would not for the world disturb the peace of John Morley or his wife, but he could not quite make up his mind to see no more of Rose. Hester should decide it.

"May I come to see you at your own home, little Hester?" he asked, with his most pleasant smile and voice.

"Would you like to come very much?" she asked, with a wistful look into his eyes.

"Very much," he answered.

"Then we shall like you to come," answered Hester, holding out her hand to him, as if to assure him of a welcome.

Robert Waldron hastily clasped the little fingers in his own, with a strange feeling of reverence for the child's faith in him; and when he released them he took off his hat with an unaccustomed deference, and bidding them good-bye, pursued his way along the park, while Hester and Rose Morley went on to Aston Court.

Miss Waldron received them with a distant approach to cordiality, which was more than enough to satisfy Rose. She enjoyed being in the spacious rooms, with a wide garden and park stretching before the windows. There was nothing narrow, confined, or sordid in this place of wealth, and her spirit expanded in it. She felt more at home, even here in Miss Waldron's austere presence, than in the close, dark, built-in rooms of her husband's house.

Happily, both Mrs. Morley and Hester gave satisfaction upon the whole to their patroness. In the amiable yielding of Rose she saw material for moulding a Christian after her own model; and Hester would soon bud into an infant prodigy of grace.

Mr. Waldron came in shortly before they left, and Miss Waldron graciously seconded his invitation to come again soon to Aston Court. Naturally, the fresh charm of Rose Morley's pretty face had more effect upon the elderly, hard-worked man than upon his daughter, but both were well pleased to have her appear occasionally to relieve the tedium of a country life.

KHIVA AND THE CENTRAL ASIATIC QUESTION.

BY A DWELLER IN ST. PETERSBURG.

SECOND ARTICLE.



E will now consider how all these movements are looked upon in India itself. A few extracts from the recent utterances of the *Delhi Gazette* will suffice to answer the question, so far as the Anglo-Indian population is concerned:—"Instead of fighting the Russians, we shall find it far more pleasant, as well as more profitable, to trade with them, if they have no objection. Bombay cotton and Hong Kong tea have already gone by the Red Sea to Odessa, and thence by rail to Moscow. Thus we find a door open to all the markets of the Russian Empire; let us hope that no misunderstanding or mismanagement may close it again. The prospect which is at present opening to business men in India and China is magnificent, and nothing but political folly on one side or the other is likely to prevent its realisation. To rival each other in the arts of peace is the true glory of nations."

The commercial scheme of a great Indo-Russian traffic, indeed, is anything but a new one; on the contrary, it is (like many other great undertakings of the present day) merely the revival of a *grande pensée* long anterior to the Christian era. M. de Lesseps completed the project of Pharaoh-necho, the Mont Cenis engineers completed that of Hannibal; and Russia, in endeavouring to make the Oxus the great highway of Central Asia, is but treading in the footsteps of Alexander the Great, and filling in, by her attempted restoration of Samarcand, the grand outline bequeathed her by Tamerlane. Russian traders visited India even before its discovery by the Portuguese; and the conquest of Astrakhan by Ivan the Terrible, in 1557, with the unusual privileges granted by Russia to the Indian merchants who settled in the town, paved the way for that great Indo-Russian commerce which rose to a height under the Czar Alexis in the latter half of the seventeenth century—died away again under his incompetent successor—and seems now, by a strange turn of fortune, likely to be restored in our own day more splendidly than ever. The project of a railway across Central Asia to the confines of India is now being debated by the Ministers of War, Finance, and Public Works, and the result of the deliberation will probably appear before very long.

But to return to the question of Khiva and

Bokhara. It has lately become fashionable to say that the defence of the approaches to Cabool is sufficiently safe in the hands of "those hereditary enemies of Russia, the hardy Teke-Turkomans."

A greater mistake could hardly have been made. If Russia depended solely upon the strong hand for the accomplishment of her purpose, it is probable enough that the Teke-Turkomans would suffice to deal with any force which she could conveniently bring against them. But these "hereditary enemies" are not a whit more averse to bribery than their neighbours; and they know well enough that those of their brethren who have submitted to Russian rule are permitted to retain their own dress, their own customs, their own religion—in a word, to remain precisely the men that they were before, under a considerably better *régime*. The ten thousand Turkomans who are now "guarding" Koochan (at the entrance of the valley which, running south-eastward towards Meshed, forms the most direct approach to Herat) simply represent so many hundred thousand roubles' worth of Russian *employés*, keeping the place warm till their masters arrive.

Not in vain has Russia contrived to spread the impression that English rule in the East means compulsory Anglisation, while Russian rule implies simply "As you were." The Asiatic naturally fraternises more readily with the semi-Asiatic than with the European, and the perception of this fact has been the corner-stone of the Russian policy both in China and Turkestan.

To recur once more to the question of a possible advance upon Herat from the north, it is worth while to observe that the prevalent opinion would seem to be that Nature has kindly surrounded the frontier of Russian Turkestan with a vast belt of parched and trackless desert, offering an all but insurmountable obstacle to the advance of any large force. But this is very far from being actually the case. The first stage of the march, from Samarcand to Merv (a comparatively short distance), is indeed trying and laborious enough; but the route thence to Herat lies through a rich and well-watered country, abounding in forage, and as practicable for the passage of artillery as "Le Petit Caporal" himself could have desired. Various reliable authorities tell me that this line is the probable one to be followed by a Russian invading force; for myself, I should feel inclined to anticipate a simultaneous advance from Samarcand on the north, and the valley of the Attreck on the west, so as to place Bokhara and the frontier of Cabool between two fires at once.

A good deal has lately been said about the advisability of separating British India and Asiatic Russia by a broad belt of neutral territory. The scheme is just as feasible as that of separating two fires by a wall of paper. Treaties of neutrality (as was truly said by one of the greatest breakers of them on record) "are very pretty to look at, but very brittle to handle," and this criticism is fully borne out by history. Rome and Carthage guaranteed the neutrality of Tarentum, and the result was that, after the unlucky city had been thrice sacked by its "natural protectors," Rome swallowed it and Carthage together. France and Spain guaranteed the neutrality of Navarre, and where is Navarre now? Russia, Prussia, and Austria guaranteed the neutrality of the "Kingdom of Poland"—with what result we all know. Turkey and Russia guaranteed the neutrality of the Danubian Principalities, and it is pretty generally agreed by this time what *their* fate would have been, had the Western Powers not interfered to protect them. If the frontier of Afghanistan is to be rendered inviolable, it must be by surer defences than these.

I must not be understood to accept all these contingencies as actually impending. Such a work requires time, and Russia knows how to wait. *Tout vient à point à qui sait attendre*, has ever been the motto of the Cabinet of St. Petersburg. By any undue resistance at present, she might peril all; and, like other conquerors, she "bides her time." Already she has secured an easy entrance into Western China, an outwork against Bokhara, a high-road to Cabool. The commercial treaty concluded between General Kaufmann and Yakoub Beg, the Sultan of Kashgar, on the 20th of June, 1872—a treaty empowering Russian agents to establish themselves in all the cities of the Sultan's territory—is "the thin end of the wedge" as regards

Kashgar and Yarkand. A little more patience, a little more negotiation, a little more bribery, a little more skilful stirring up of strife among the native chiefs, and then—"To Herat!"

But even in this apparent madness of spoliation there is a certain method. Russia's advance in the far East is not dictated by a mere blind, unreasoning lust of conquest; and although the Moscow party may talk loudly of future triumphs and universal dominion, the real *terminus ad quem* is a far less visionary and infinitely more remunerative one. To concentrate all the rivelets of Central Asiatic trade into one channel—to draw to herself the rich commerce of Kashgar and Yarkand, and pour into Russian markets the boundless resources of Western China—this is a project well worth realising; and such is the ultimate programme of Russia.

Turkestan—although now costing more than it brings in, thanks to the fabulous expense of the army of occupation—is precisely one of those political investments which pay magnificently after a certain time. Its resources are practically unlimited, though requiring time and labour for their due development. It is difficult to exaggerate the advantages which the complete possession of the Lower Oxus, the establishment of a silk manufacture at Khodjent, the opening of direct communications between Tashkent and Teheran, and the completion of the Caucasus railway, would confer upon Russia.

In the far future, the Russian statesmen behold the vision of a golden age, when the capitalists of Western Europe shall scramble for shares in the Grand Central Tashkent and Teheran Railway—when Chinese and Belooch students shall flock to the University of Bokhara, and all nations send their representatives to the Great International Exhibition of Samarcand.

MY LOVE.



LOUIE can sing—

Not larks that float above the yellow wheat
Can give a touch of melody as sweet
As she can sing;

Not brooks that pipe to posies blue and white
Can drown my senses in such dear delight
As when my love doth sing.

Louie has eyes—

Not summer heavens mirrored in clear streams
Can fold me in such soft delicious dreams
As my love's eyes;

Not ocean's secret cavern pools that glow
In fairy palaces such beauty know

As my love's bright brown eyes.

Louie has hair—

You may not such surpassing fairness find
In golden grain that curtseys to the wind

As in her hair;

Not moonlight sleeping on an angel's wings
Is half as sweet, nor aught that nature brings,
As my love's light brown hair.

Such is my love—

The larks that over yellow wheat fields float
May to another sing as sweet a note

As does my love;

But if another would her beauty know
Let him unto his own fair mistress go—

Fairer is my dear love.

GUY ROSLYN.



'TO TWINE BACK THE TENDRILS.'

BRING ROSES!



'LIFE IS SO FAIR.'

BRING roses!
Life is so fair,
The world is golden-paven
Everywhere.

Youth dips his white foot in the stream
So slowly flowing;
Life is a glorious dream,
Still growing
Into a fair reality.

Bring roses !

Life has grown dark ;

The river sullen rages,

And no spark

Of sunlight flecks the waves, and wild.

The wind is blowing :

The dream fled with the dawning ;

Life is growing

Into a sad reality.

Bring roses !

For life is cold,

And lacks the beauty-woven

Veil of old.

Scatter the swiftly ebbing tide

With flowers a-glowing,

That mortals may not heed

Its flowing

Unto a dark reality.

Bring roses !

For life hath fled :

Twine them with gold-eyed pansies

For the dead ;

Then stay thy hand—*for* Death hath brought

Roses supernal.

Earth's dream is passed, and in

Th' eternal

Man finds a blest reality.

JULIA GODDARD.

A MYSTERY.

IN THREE CHAPTERS.—CHAPTER THE FIRST.



T No. 10, Crawley Street, Pitborough, lived Mr. Hartley, the uncle of my friend John Ormerod, who had often spoken to me of the old man's peculiarities, and among other things had stated that as his uncle was a bachelor he expected to inherit his property. This, if report spoke the truth, was considerable ; for old Hartley, although he lived in a very mean fashion, was reputed to be rich, and was generally known as "the miser."

Crawley Street was not exactly the place that a man of wealth would be expected to choose for his dwelling ; it was a poor shabby street in the suburbs of Pitborough, a manufacturing town, many of the houses in which were let out to lodgers, and indeed I believe No. 10 was the only house that was not so underlet ; but there Mr. Hartley had been born, and there he had expressed his intention of dying, and there, meanwhile, he lived with one old servant.

John Ormerod was a constant visitor at Pitborough, by the old man's invitation, but the latter with characteristic meanness seldom received his nephew as his guest, and then only to dine with him now and then. The recognised course was for the younger man to remain at some hotel during his stay, where he was expected to entertain his uncle when his uncle was not disposed to entertain him, which was pretty often. I call this a characteristic meanness, because substantially old Hartley was very generous to his nephew, supplying him liberally with money ; but it was in these small things, in the giving of dinners and so on, that his avarice seemed to master him ; he had no objection to giving money, but grudged spending

it. So although Ormerod was wont to laugh at his uncle's eccentricities (behind his back, of course, for he had expectations), he had an affection for him which, I believe, was not wholly interested, and always showed great pleasure when called down to Pitborough, a pleasure I used to think was in some measure assumed, not knowing then the true reason for it.

In the autumn of the year 18— occurred the events which I am about to relate. Ormerod was away on one of his Pitborough visits, and I was by myself in London, in anything but a cheerful frame of mind ; for I was out of employment and, in a word, hard up—so hard up indeed that I was anxiously waiting for my friend's return, in order to borrow a sovereign or two of him, for he always returned with money in his pocket. One day I had dined on a cup of coffee and a roll—I could afford no more—and having very minutely examined the advertisements and found nothing that would at all suit me, turned to the news part of the paper, when almost the first paragraph which greeted my eye was one entitled "Mysterious Murder."

"On Tuesday morning, Pitborough and its vicinity was thrown into a state of great excitement, by a most mysterious tragedy. It appears that Mr. Hartley, of Crawley Street, reputed to be a man of great wealth and eccentric manners, and well known in the neighbourhood, failed to make his appearance at the usual time in the morning, and as the servant could obtain no answer on knocking at the door, which according to his usual practice was locked, her suspicions were roused, and she summoned a policeman to her assistance, by whom the room was forcibly entered, when the unfortunate man was found dead in his bed, murdered in a most frightful manner. Medical aid was at once sent for, but without avail, as life had been extinct some hours. His escritoire had been broken open, but whether any money had been taken from it cannot be ascertained, as the deceased was very uncommunicative concerning his affairs, but it is believed he kept his money there. What renders the case more mysterious, is that the door and window were both fastened on the inside ; but the police are said to have obtained a clue to the murderer, which they are energetically following up, and we hope in our next issue to report his apprehension."

To say that I was shocked on reading this would be too strong a word; I was startled, but the uppermost thought in my mind was that now my friend would be a rich man; for it must be remembered that Mr. Hartley was a perfect stranger to me, and it was perhaps natural that I should think more of the good that had befallen the one I knew, than of the evil that had befallen the other.

I thought a good deal about the news paragraph that day, having but little to occupy me, and the more I thought about it the more fascinated did I become by one portion of the newspaper report, namely, that relating to the fastening of the door and window. I had always had a fancy, perhaps it was a morbid fancy, for unravelling the mysterious; there was a sort of detective instinct within me, which I was always wishing to indulge, and the strange circumstance of the murderer having locked himself out roused it at once.

There was a fine opportunity of exercising my talents in my friend's service, and I determined, if the next day's paper did not clear up the mystery, to write to Ormerod and offer to assist in tracking the criminal. But that letter was prevented, and in an unexpected manner, for as I sat that evening thinking over the matter and smoking my pipe, Ormerod himself walked in. He was nervous and agitated, and without a word of greeting, plunged at once into the subject.

"You have heard of the terrible affair, have you not, G——? It was in the paper this morning."

"Yes," I said, "I have read it."

"Shocking, shocking! It has quite upset me. I dined with him last night, and this morning—but you don't know the worst—good Heaven, I think I shall go mad with it all!"

"Not the worst?" I said.

"No. They say the police have got a clue."

I shrugged my shoulders, and said, "We all know what that means—nothing at all."

"It means something! It means this, that they suspect me!"

"You!" I exclaimed, for I was fairly surprised.

"Yes; they have set a watch upon me. I am followed wherever I go. They have followed me up here, and are watching this house even now. I'll tell you what it is, G——: this is a most unhappy business; but the truth is that when that murder was committed I was away from my hotel. I did not return until very late, and that has come to their knowledge."

"But, my good fellow," said I, "that is the simplest matter in the world. Let us go over the circumstances together, and I have no doubt we shall be able not only to account for every minute of your absence, but find credible witnesses to support us. If that is their only evidence their suspicions will soon be laid."

But he shook his head, and said nervously, "No, I can't—I can't."

"Nonsense," I replied, as cheerfully as I could; "bring your mind to it as steadily as you can and you will soon remember."

"You don't understand," he said; "I do remember perfectly where I was, and I was with one person all the while; but that person—Look here, G——, I'll tell you the whole story, and then you will see in how unpleasant a position I am placed."

It seems that, in his visits to Pitborough, he had made the acquaintance of a young lady named L——, the daughter of a very rich manufacturer, with whom he had fallen in love at first sight, and that first sight was in church. I confess, from what Ormerod told me, I was not impressed with a very favourable opinion of Miss L——, although in his eyes she was, of course, an angel. She seemed to be a vain, giddy, thoughtless girl, who, having observed his admiration, gave him a good deal of encouragement. The result was that a clandestine correspondence was established between the two, which had lasted for a considerable time.

He retained sufficient sense to know well that Mr. L—— was far too proud and rich a man ever to favour his suit, and so was only too ready to enter into this romantic intrigue, culminating in that unfortunate appointment on the night of the murder. Mr. L—— was away on business, and his daughter had taken this opportunity of receiving young Ormerod; but as it was important that no one should know it except her own maid, who was the go-between in the affair, it was necessary that they should wait until the other servants had retired before admitting her lover, and hence it happened that he did not return to his hotel until so late, and suspicion was directed towards him.

"And now you see," he said in conclusion, "why I cannot account for my time. I had rather be suspected for ever than cast the least stain upon her name. She will know the reason of my silence, and that is sufficient."

I knew him too well to try arguments upon him now. I simply made a mental note of the young lady's name and address, and then said—

"And what do you propose doing now? Do you remain in London?"

"No," he replied, "they will think I am trying to avoid them if I do that. I shall return to Pitborough to-morrow morning, and let them do their worst; besides, I must be present to arrange about the funeral and attend the inquest. Perhaps they will warn me not to give evidence to incriminate myself," he added bitterly, "but I must be there."

"Can you lend me five pounds?" I asked abruptly.

He looked somewhat disgusted at my thinking of such a thing at that moment, but took a note from his pocket at once, and handed it to me.

"He gave it to me," he said, "the last time I saw him."

"What was your purpose in coming to London?"

"My purpose was a foolish one," he said bitterly; "I thought you might have assisted me in my trouble, given me some advice, done something, Heaven knows what! Now I will go back again."

"Good," I said, "I will do something. Now listen to me, Ormerod, and don't fly away with the idea that I am a selfish brute. I want money badly enough, I admit, but I did not ask this for myself, as you shall see. The police think they have got hold of a clue, which we know to be a false one, and therefore they are utterly useless for our purpose. They are following the wrong man, and will persist in following him, whereas we want to get hold of the right one. We will leave them to their task, if you please, and I will undertake to do your detective business for you. I have not matured my plans yet, but I know this, that I can do nothing without money, and there it is. At what time does your train leave to-morrow morning?"

"At eight o'clock."

"Very well; I shall most likely go down by the next train, or at any rate in the course of the day, and we shall meet again in Pitborough; but when we do, above all things remember this, that we have never met before. Don't speak to me unless I speak to you. And now tell me all the particulars you know."

He had not much to tell, the sum of his information being as follows:—On the fatal evening he had dined with Mr. Hartley at his house; the old man was particularly cheerful that evening, had given him notes to the amount of fifty pounds, and when his nephew took his leave rather earlier than usual on such occasions, had gone unpleasantly near the truth by asking jocularly if she couldn't wait a little.

When he left, there was only Mr. Hartley and the old servant in the house. The latter, who was very deaf, slept in the basement, and heard nothing during the night. Mr. Hartley slept at the top of the house, in a back room. The intervening rooms, with the exception of the front parlour where he took his

meals, and the back parlour which he called his study, were used simply for lumber. All the lower windows were strongly barred and the doors sheeted with iron, several attempts having already been made to break into the house. I took a note of these particulars, and then Ormerod went to his own rooms, closely followed as I observed by a man. But I took care not to show myself, as I did not wish to be recognised when I got to Pitborough.

I arranged my plans that night as I lay in bed, and the next morning was ready for action. The first thing I did was to call upon a friend who reported for a daily paper; he was also a friend of Ormerod's, and I had no hesitation in speaking to him on the subject. I told him I was going down to Pitborough in the capacity of a detective, and should hold myself out as a representative of the press, as that character would give me greater facilities of obtaining information than any other.

"And what paper do you represent for the occasion?" he asked.

"It depends on circumstances," I replied.

"What circumstances?"

There were some of his cards on the mantelpiece, bearing his name and the name of the paper on which he was engaged—the *Daily Dart*. I looked significantly at these, he did the same, and then I answered his question—

"What circumstances! well, it depends on your looking out of the window for a moment."

He laughed and looked out of the window, and as soon as his back was turned I put the cards in my pocket. No more was said upon the subject, but he knew as well as I did what had taken place. I saw him glance at the mantelpiece again when the transfer had been made, and where I had left two cards for the sake of appearances, but nothing had been said to compromise him in the matter.

That day I paid for my ticket with the note Ormerod had given me, and in due time arrived at Pitborough, where I hired a bed at a small inn near the scene of the murder, and called myself Mr. Burton of the *Daily Dart*.

END OF CHAPTER THE FIRST.

IMPROVED CHANNEL STEAMERS.

BY W. H. WHITE, FELLOW OF THE ROYAL SCHOOL OF NAVAL ARCHITECTURE.



EVERY one is agreed that the present means of communication between this country and the Continent are disgraceful and inefficient; but there is not the same unanimity of opinion respecting the plan which should supersede existing arrangements. It is generally conceded, however, that improvements in the steamers employed on this service would remove the most

serious causes of discomfort, and give time for the development of the grander schemes which have been proposed, supposing it to become desirable eventually to replace steamers by some permanent work—such as a tunnel. Unfortunately for travellers, this apparently simple problem of constructing larger and swifter steamers has been associated with other questions, not free from doubt or difficulty—such as the transit of trains across the Straits of Dover;

the use of the present French harbours, their improvement to a partial extent, or the construction of new and better harbours; and other matters to which we have already alluded. Adding to this the unavoidable delays incidental to the Franco-German War and the recent change of government in France, the natural antagonism of existing interests at Calais and Boulogne to any changes which would prejudicially affect them, and the opposition which has been encountered by the promoters of some schemes in their attempts to procure Parliamentary sanction, there is no difficulty in understanding how four years have passed without seeing any practical improvement carried out.

These considerations also indicate the desirability of making use of the present French harbours, if that be possible, with steamers of special design; for such a plan not only involves far less expenditure, but depends for its accomplishment solely upon the confidence and support of the British public, and can in no way be influenced by the governmental or local action of our neighbours. The essential condition of the designs of all such vessels is found in their necessarily shallow draught, not exceeding seven or eight feet; but as to length and breadth the designer is not confined within similarly narrow limits.

Three such schemes have of late been prominently before the public, having been made the bases of limited liability companies. One of these appears to aim at carrying out the recommendation made by Captain Tyler in 1869, for establishing a service of large swift steamers between Dover and Boulogne, and need not be further described, as its main features have already been discussed in this Magazine.* The other two are of more recent date, and include many novel and interesting features, which we propose to sketch briefly; taking first the plan with which Mr. Bessemer's name is associated, and afterwards that of which Captain Dickey is the author.

The chief novelty in the Bessemer steamer consists in the so-called "still" or suspended saloon, which is intended to relieve the passengers from the effect of the rolling motion of the ship, and so to lessen, if not prevent, sea-sickness. Mr. E. J. Reed, C.B. (late Chief Constructor of the Navy), is the designer of the vessels, and the statement of this fact will suffice to show that all possible provision on the necessarily shallow draught will have been made to insure the realisation of the high speed intended—twenty miles per hour—as well as to secure from the ships themselves that good behaviour and easy motion which must, independently of the Bessemer saloon, conduce greatly to the comfort of the passengers. The length of the

steamers is to be 350 feet, or about 100 feet longer than the longest of the vessels now in use; their breadth will be 40 feet over the deck proper, but there are to be two pairs of paddle-wheels, and over these the breadth will be 65 feet. In order to admit of the saloon being placed at the centre of the ship, the pairs of paddle-wheels are situated more than 100 feet apart, and will be driven by independent engines developing an aggregate of about 4,600 horse-power. Outside the hull, between the paddle-boxes, deep "bilge keels" will be fastened for the purpose of reducing the rolling motion of the vessel, the usefulness of such projecting pieces having, of late years, been fully established.

The two extremities of the steamers will be shaped alike, or in technical language, they will be "double-enders" (like many of the passenger steamers on the Thames); and being provided with a rudder at each end, they will be able to steam equally well with either end foremost. This is a very important feature, because the great length of the vessels would prevent them from turning in the narrow harbours—a manœuvre which will be quite unnecessary as they are now arranged. One other feature of their design must be mentioned: the ends are made very low for about 50 feet from each extremity, in order to reduce the pitching motion, and to render the vessels more manageable in entering and leaving harbours.

From a review of these facts, and a consideration of the general character of the waves to be encountered in the Straits of Dover, there appears good reason for accepting Mr. Reed's conclusion that these large steamers will prove very steady, comparatively free from pitching, and generally well-behaved; and it is obvious that they must be beyond comparison superior in all these respects to the relatively small and slow boats now in use.

In accommodation for passengers the new vessels are also intended to be much superior to the present ones. The suspended Bessemer saloon is to be no less than 70 feet long, 35 feet wide, and 20 feet high, fully justifying the opinion expressed regarding it, that "it will form by far the finest cabin that has ever been fitted in a ship." Besides this there is to be a large fixed cabin, 52 feet long, apparently for second-class passengers, at one end of the vessel beneath the deck; and between the paddle-boxes, along the sides of the upper deck, are to be built a range of cabins, including one for smoking, another for refreshments, lavatories, etc. etc. Travellers unable, or unwilling, to incur the additional expense of taking tickets for the Bessemer saloon, will therefore be far better off than they could be at present, even with the best accommodation accessible; for most persons who have made the passage agree in thinking that, on the whole, the open deck is preferable to the cabins of

* See "The Channel Passage" in the part for October, 1872.

the steamers now in use, small and ill-ventilated as they necessarily are.

It is hard to distinguish between the suffering arising from sea-sickness, and the aggravation of suffering arising from the discomforts incidental to deficient accommodation; but the latter form by no means an insignificant item. Any proposal, therefore, which promises to furnish proper shelter and ample accommodation, in association with steadier, swifter, and larger steamers, will undoubtedly meet with general approval; and whatever may be the amount of success achieved by Mr. Bessemer's invention, the steamers which may be built on this design will scarcely fail to secure a large share of public patronage.

Let us next glance at the principle of the Bessemer saloon, and its probable effect in alleviating the pangs of sea-sickness.

The saloon is supported at each end on a longitudinal axis, and consequently if left free to move it would be made to oscillate when the steamer rolled. Mr. Bessemer, however, does not make use of this method of free suspension, but adopts what he terms "controlled suspension;" in other words, he has devised a hydraulic apparatus, which is managed by a single man, who can easily control the motion of the saloon relatively to the ship, and keep the floor of the saloon parallel to a spirit-level which he has in view, no matter how much the ship may roll. Of the complete success of the hydraulic apparatus in controlling the motion which the saloon would tend to acquire, there can be no question. Mr. Bessemer has in this particular secured the approval of all the numerous visitors to his working model, fitted up as an illustration of the plan, in his grounds at Denmark Hill.

There are, however, reasons for doubting whether the spirit-level, used for the purpose of keeping the saloon free from rolling oscillation, should not be replaced by some other instrument or arrangement; for it is well known to all persons conversant with naval architecture that, in a ship moving amongst waves, particularly if they are of large size, spirit-levels cease to indicate the true horizontal, and mark varying indications more or less closely approximating to the horizontal. It would not be difficult to arrange some simple piece of mechanism which should constantly indicate the true horizontal, and should thus enable the manipulator of the hydraulic apparatus to keep the floor of the saloon constantly level in the transverse sense. Such a minor modification of the plan could and would doubtless be made, should experience prove it to be necessary.

It has already been stated that these steamers will probably prove very steady, so that the relative motions of the saloon and the ship will most likely be small; but Mr. Bessemer is prepared to deal

with very considerable motions. He has also expressed his readiness to devise an arrangement for extending the principle of controlled suspension to pitching as well as rolling oscillations; but this would necessarily be more complicated than the present plan, and it has been preferred to restrict the first experiments to the extinction of rolling oscillations.

The great length of the ship and her low ends are to be trusted to do away with any extensive pitching, and the effect of the actual motion upon the saloon is reduced to a minimum by placing it at the middle of the ship. When comfortably seated in this spacious apartment, it is hoped that the traveller may to a great extent be deprived of the unpleasant consciousness that he is at sea, and that many who now suffer severely from sea-sickness may be saved from such suffering. There will be few who will not join in the hope that these expectations may be more than realised; but there are some who are not sanguine of the success of the plan, and we will endeavour to state the grounds of their doubts.

A vessel at sea among waves has, in addition to her onward motion, certain pitching, rolling, swaying, and heaving motions. Respecting pitching and rolling nothing need be said, since every one who has made the shortest cruise at sea will be familiar with the meaning of these terms, and it has already been shown that in the Bessemer steamers every precaution has been taken, that is possible on the very shallow draught, to minimise the effect of these motions. Swaying and heaving motions will, perhaps, not be so generally understood; but they may be popularly explained as the horizontal and vertical oscillations which the waves compel a ship to perform when she is floating amongst them. For instance, if a steamer is running parallel to the line of a wave-crest, with the waves "abeam" as a sailor would say, the passage of the wave would obviously tend to raise the ship bodily in a vertical sense, and it would no less truly tend to make her move horizontally or sway.

The extent of such heaving and swaying motions is dependent upon the relative magnitude of the steamer and of the waves; if they are large in comparison with the steamer the motions will be large, if small the motions will be small, and may be scarcely perceptible. Consequently it will be seen that by making the steamers large, these unavoidable motions are likely to be less troublesome, because less violent and extensive; and, in addition, if the general character of the Channel waves is what the promoters of the Bessemer steamers assert, the steamers will be large relatively to them, and will be little affected by heaving and swaying.

On this matter experience alone can prove conclusive; arguments would be wasted where observation alone can decide; but it is scarcely probable

that such a statement as that made by the eminent advocates of the new scheme, would have been put forward without careful and extensive observation.

It is undoubted that the vertical motion is that which mainly causes sea-sickness, and the testimony of all sufferers may be confidently appealed to in support of this statement. It must also be clear that vertical motions must necessarily exist in the ship, although their extent and rapidity may be comparatively trifling. But the great question to be solved is, whether the practical elimination of the effects of rolling and pitching may not prove such a source of relief as would enable many, if not most, of those who make the voyage to successfully resist the disturbing influences of the remaining motions. We trust that the time is not far distant when this question may receive an answer from the actual performances of the Bessemer steamer which is, we believe, now being constructed.

Captain Dicey has proposed a plan of a very different character, known as the "twin-ship" scheme. He adopts great length in order to reduce pitching, but does not favour the low ends of the Bessemer ship; his vessel is also intended to steam equally well with either end foremost. Instead of trusting to ordinary methods for securing steadiness, Captain Dicey prefers to adopt a very unusual although not an entirely novel form of hull, in order to minimise rolling motion.

If an ordinary ship be supposed to be cut in two from stem to stern, along the line of her keel, and the half-hulls, each having been completed by water-tight skins on the plane of section, are supposed to be moved twenty or thirty feet apart, and yoked together by strong girders at the height of their deck, a very good idea will be obtained of the proposed form of "twin-ship." The passenger accommodation, which is intended to be of the best character, would be provided for by means of saloons or cabins built on the broad deck above the connecting girders, at a considerable height above water; and the frame-work of these constructions is intended to be made to contribute to the strength of the connection between the two hulls. The propelling paddle-wheels are to be placed within the central space between the hulls, and are to be only two in number.

Twin-vessels have already been built and experimented upon in this country, but have not been used at sea, nor constructed on the large scale contemplated by Captain Dicey. From the very peculiarity of their form they possess great stability, and there seems reason to believe that for the passage across the Straits these vessels would prove, under most circumstances, very steady, although experience does not afford conclusive means of comparing their probable behaviour with that of well-designed ships of ordinary form supplied with deep bilge keels. Captain Dicey would

seem to have concluded not merely that vessels of the latter class could not be made nearly so steady as his twin-ships, but that they could not be made sufficiently steady for the purpose intended; and here again we are not furnished with conclusive evidence, for no fair inference can be drawn from the behaviour of the steamers at present running across the Straits.

In the Indian seas, it is true, twin-canoes have long been used, and are found to possess very good sea-going qualities; but it can scarcely be conceded that this fact furnishes sufficient reason for abandoning the ordinary form of hull in favour of the twin system in very large steam-propelled vessels. Captain Dicey and his colleagues appear to admit this, and trials are to be made, it is said, with a twin-vessel of about the displacement of one of the Citizen steamers on the Thames, for the purpose of illustrating the advantages of the principle.

The results will be extremely interesting; but, apart from the comparative success or failure of this model vessel, there are some serious objections to the adoption of the plan in the very much larger Channel steamers. Neither of the half-hulls alone would be stable, and consequently disaster would inevitably follow their separation. Hence it would be necessary to provide an extremely strong connection between them, and to expend a considerable weight of material for the purpose. Besides, the inside skins of the half-hulls would involve additional weights as compared with an ordinary ship; and altogether the floating structure would undoubtedly be heavier and more costly than a vessel of ordinary form, would have proportionately less carrying power, and would lend itself far less readily to the stowage of luggage or cargo in the holds. In addition, the fluid resistance would be increased considerably by the larger area of the immersed surface; and the position of the propellers would necessarily lessen their efficiency; both causes tending to produce a falling-off in speed unless the power and weight of the engines were increased.

It may also be fairly questioned whether a vessel of such large dimensions and peculiar form would prove easily manageable; and, on all these grounds, we base the opinion that, to say the least, the Dicey steamers would necessarily be to a far greater extent experimental vessels than their rivals, the Bessemer steamers.

If the fundamental assumption of Captain Dicey, that the twin form is practically essential to the degree of steadiness he desires to attain in order to avoid sea-sickness, were admitted, the objections urged above, while retaining their force to a large extent, might be over-ruled. But we are by no means convinced that this is true, or that the practical disadvantages of the peculiar twin form would not more than counterbalance, on trial, its probable steadiness. If the Dicey steamers are built

we wish them every success ; and their trials will not fail to be watched closely by all persons interested in naval architecture.

There are other schemes for improved Channel steamers to which reference might be made if space permitted, but this cannot now be done. Of the probable accomplishment of one or more of the schemes that have been described, there is little reason to despair. That for the Dover-Boulogne service appears to have secured the support of

many of the principal authorities, having the direction of the English railways by which passengers would be conveyed to the port of embarkation ; and this is no small advantage. The public will not, we trust, suffer longer delays from the fact that there are these rival schemes in the field, but rather be benefited by the competition, and before this year ends have at their service, for the Channel passage, larger, swifter, and more commodious vessels.

HESTER MORLEY'S PROMISE.

BY HESBA STRETTON,

AUTHOR OF "THE DOCTOR'S DILEMMA," ETC. ETC.

CHAPTER THE TENTH.

NEW HOPES.

THE intercourse between Miss Waldron and Mrs. John Morley ripened into a kind of intimacy, which continued crude and raw at its nearest approach to mellowness : a sour grape which would have set on edge any other teeth than those of the dull and weary young wife. It was the first winter of her married life, and she seized eagerly upon every chance and every excuse for going to Aston Court. It was at least an opportunity for displaying the too costly and elegant dresses which were lost in the seclusion of her own home. Miss Waldron sharply reproved her for them, and Rose meekly promised to buy no more when they were done with ; but in order to wear them out, it was needful to wear them, and Miss Waldron was compelled to acknowledge the logic.

Mr. Waldron liked to see the pretty girl about his solemn house, and to hear her pleasant voice, now speaking, now singing, just as he willed. While Robert, in sheer idleness and without thought, loitered at home, instead of going off on some autumn tour as usual, satisfied with the little ripple of excitement which the near vicinity of Rose kept stirring gently about him.

Nor was John Morley at all discontent with his wife's new friendships. They had restored her old brightness and buoyancy, and they afforded her a pleasant society without entailing upon him the dreaded necessity of receiving and entertaining guests in his own house ; for it is needless to say that it entered into the imagination of no one to conceive the idea of Miss Waldron visiting familiarly under the tradesman's roof. Robert Waldron came often ; and Mr. Waldron, whenever he had business to transact with his brother deacon, no longer tarried in the shop, but entered the room behind ; when by opening the door, and calling in

sonorous tones for Mrs. Morley and Hester, he was always sure of securing a few minutes' lively chat, such as had a wonderful flavour for the dry, hard mind of the Puritanical man. But Miss Waldron came never.

Still John Morley was not disturbed about this. He was too democratic to trouble himself with questions of superiority and inferiority in the social scale. He believed, and he had no reason to believe otherwise, that Miss Waldron was a young woman of eminent piety ; all the church said so, and every word and look of her own asserted it. She was interesting herself in the conversion of his young wife, so beloved yet so worldly, whose condition weighed heavily upon his spirit, and caused him hours of painful and accusing thought. He thanked God fervently for this intimacy ; and a brighter glow of brotherly feeling towards the Waldrons was kindled in his heart.

About this time also there were new hopes cherished by Mr. Waldron for his son. There had been such hopes before, brooded over and fostered in secret ; but while they were still callow and unfledged, some fresh outbreak of Robert's had always caused them to perish.

He was not vicious ; he had never yet been guilty of any flagrant crime ; and in the eyes of most fathers he would have appeared a sufficiently promising son.

But Mr. Waldron could not be contented with anything short of a decided change from the careless freaks of youth to the complete devotion of himself to religion. He had put both his children under a forcing frame, and his daughter had bloomed into the blossom he had hoped for ; though in his secret soul he marvelled at the scanty sweetness and beauty of the growth. But it was not so with his son. Instead of becoming the strong, staunch dissenter he wished for, he had developed into a

lax indifferentism, composed partly of indolence and partly of disgust.

He had always been anxious to abridge his visits at home, and prolong those listless sojourns abroad which he professed to enjoy. But this autumn he seemed to be in no hurry to quit Aston Court. He submitted himself to the rigorous rules of his father's house; was quiet and thoughtful; attended chapel regularly every Sunday morning, and not unfrequently in the evening. In fact, his conduct was blameless, except that he would not

CHAPTER THE ELEVENTH.
SUNDAY VISITORS.

It was a Sunday evening in the depth of winter, with a keen, bitter wind whistling round the house, and moaning under the gables, and with a thick carpet of snow, scarcely trodden, lying in the narrow street. John Morley was gone to chapel without his wife, who had been slightly ailing all the week; and Hester had stayed at home to be her companion. Both the servants were gone out also. Though she was really somewhat unwell,



"HER FACE HIDDEN IN HER HANDS."

listen to the exhortations and reproofs of his sister. In his secret heart Mr. Waldron foretasted the joy which the angels in heaven would experience over his son's repentance.

The visits of Robert Waldron to John Morley's house were ostensibly paid to Hester. The child attached herself to him with a very frank and very warm affection; and his easy nature, which found great delight in the admiration and love of others, returned her fondness. Never did a man—he was scarcely more than a boy yet—drift more aimlessly into a strong current of temptation. He very seldom saw John Morley, who kept close to his business; but Rose's drawing-room became his most frequent resort.

never had Rose looked so pretty as on this night, with a lace cap half covering her fair hair, and a bright-coloured shawl hanging gracefully about her, and forming a strong contrast to the unusual delicacy of her face.

The drawing-room, where she was sitting with Hester, was well lit up; and a passer-by, if there were any, could not fail to notice the brightness of the light within, if he did not hear the tones of the piano which Rose was playing, not being ill enough to give up that pleasure. Apparently some one had seen the light, and heard the music, for there was a knock twice repeated at the house door.

Hester lighted a candle, and went down-stairs alone, for she had promised her father faithfully

not to let Rose be exposed to any cold air during his absence. The key was hard to turn in the lock, and she had to put both her hands and all her strength to it; but at last it yielded, and she opened the door cautiously. A tall figure, well wrapped up, and sprinkled with snow, stood upon the door-sill; but Hester's momentary alarm was quickly pacified by hearing a friendly and familiar voice.

"Is your father at home, dear little Hetty?" inquired Robert Waldron.

"Oh, no!" answered Hester, still holding the door in her hand, and keeping the untimely visitor on the outside; "he went to chapel nearly half an hour ago, and he will not come home till late, because there is some meeting after the sermon. Do you want to see him very much, Mr. Robert?"

"Not particularly," he said; "only Miss Waldron, who is not able to come up to chapel to-night, told me to inquire how your mother is. Is she at home, my dear?"

"Yes," replied Hester; "did you not hear her playing before you knocked?"

"I suppose she is too poorly for me to come in and see her," he said.

"Oh, no!" she cried eagerly, "if you'd please to come in. Only you must take off your great-coat, for it is covered with snow, and you must not touch her with your cold hands. My father never touches her when his hands are cold."

She had admitted him into the old-fashioned entrance, which had a kitchen grate, and many doors entering into it, with the staircase running up one side of it; and she had already turned the key again in the lock, while Robert stood twirling his hat upon his hand, with an aspect of hesitating irresolution. Hester, after locking the door, approached to take from him his hat and coat.

"You are sure I shall do no harm by seeing your mamma, Hetty?" he asked, again leaving the decision of his conduct to the unconscious answer of the child.

"Oh, no!" she said gaily; "she is not so very poorly, and she will be very glad to see you, and so shall I. Please to follow me up-stairs."

She tripped up lightly before him, holding the candle high above her head, and looking back now and then with a half-childish, half-womanly smile.

He was in Rose's drawing-room, speaking to her, while Hester held both his hands to prevent his touching her, before he had well collected his thoughts. He sank into the seat Hester placed for him near the fire, feeling himself in a kind of dream, in which his mind and conscience dare not stir, for fear of dispelling the fleeting vision. He was afraid to think; but from time to time he glanced, almost timidly, at the sweet pallor of Rose's face, and the clear gentle lustre of her eyes.

How much more lovely she was than when he had known her three years ago! They had not

much to say to one another; but Rose sighed at times, and then his eyes were raised to her face with an air of perplexity and sadness. He took Hester upon his knee, and read to her that charming child's book, "The Story without an End." Though he read well, he was not conscious of a word beyond the title, but he knew that Rose was listening; and Hester's arm round his neck, and her soft cheek upon his shoulder, made him feel weaker than a reed, with some subtle and clinging influence winding about him he knew not how.

The sound of his own voice was all that could be heard, for if there were any footsteps in the streets on a Sunday night at this hour of Divine service, they fell noiselessly upon the snow. Suddenly, upon the utter quiet, there came the sharp and noisy bang of a door falling to in some part of the house, and Robert started nervously from his chair, and looked about him as if for some means of escape, or place of concealment.

"Why! it is only a door slamming somewhere," said Hester, with a little laugh of amusement; "I must go and shut it, or else it will be frightening you again."

"Shall I come with you?" asked Robert.

"No, thank you," answered the child, assuming a fine tone of superiority, "I am not frightened. What is there to be afraid of? Besides, I must go and see that the kitchen fire is not gone out, and you must not go there with me."

She lighted a candle, and went out into the dark passage, screening the scarcely lit flame with her hand. Down-stairs ran her small, nimble feet; and then Hester almost uttered a shrill scream of terror.

In the middle of the lobby stood a bent and spare figure, more sprinkled with snow than Robert had been, and with a faint halo of light shining about it from a little lamp, which was on the point of dying out. In another moment she had recognised Lawson, whose sunken eyes were glancing restlessly around him, as he drew off his heavy boots and set them cautiously on one side.

"Is that you, Lawson?" asked Hester, her heart still beating fast with fear.

"Yes, it's me," he answered. "I'm uneasy to-night, and I came down to see that all was safe. Let us look in here first."

Upon the other side of the lobby was a door into Mr. Morley's own room; and he stole noiselessly across the quarried floor, and opened it without a sound. There was the light only of a low fire, of embers glowing without flame, and everything looked dim and indistinct by it. He looked round the room eagerly and keenly, and then turned to Hester, who had followed him closely.

"Miss Hester," he whispered in thick and hurried tones, "I thought I should find your mother here."

"She is up-stairs in the drawing-room," she answered, "only Mr. Robert is there too."

"No, not her! not her!" he said impatiently, "I mean your own mother. Don't you know, deary, I've never set eyes on her since John Morley brought a strange woman into the house? Never! Though my work all goes wrong, and my hand has lost its cunning, she never comes back to show me what to do. But to-night, whilst I was at chapel, it came all at once into my mind that I should find her sitting here alone in the house, crying and sobbing, with her face hidden in her hands. I fancied she'd be there in her own old place; but maybe she is up-stairs in my work-room."

"But didn't you know *she* was ill?" asked Hester, not venturing to call Rose *mother* in Lawson's hearing.

"No. Ill is she?" he said eagerly; "perhaps she'll die. Your mother died easily, Miss Hester. But I'm going up-stairs. Will you come with me, little one?"

He called her "little one" in a tone of such strange and pathetic tenderness, that Hester put her hand in his, though she was trembling with an undefined fear. They went out together into the snowy court first, to look up to the lattice window in the high gable. The snow hung about it with a ghostly gleam, and the moon shining wanly upon its diamond panes made them glimmer as if with some feeble, unearthly light within. Lawson lifted Hester in his arms, and mounted the outer staircase, which led to the old printing office. Passing through this they came to the foot of the attic steps, winding up into the pale darkness above. Still carrying her in his arms, Lawson ascended them swiftly but soundlessly, as if fearful of scaring away some timid and easily startled presence. The room was full of light from the moon, which shone directly upon the casement: a visionary light, in which the most familiar objects assume an unreal aspect.

There stood his press, and his tools growing red with rust; and there the shelves of books, whose gilded bindings shone palely in the gloom. But the room was empty. There was no shadowy figure, sitting alone, with its tearful face hidden in the hands.

Hester looked around with a mingled dread and love of this unknown mother, so often felt to be present by the man whose heart she could feel beating strongly with anticipation. But neither of them could detect the form they sought in the dimness; and Lawson put down Hester and walked to and fro in the attic, with gestures of lamentation and despair.

"If she would only come again!" he cried, wringing his hands, "if she would but bring me back the cunning of my right hand! But I have lost it, and nobody can restore it to me, save her. Oh, come back! For the sake of your little child, come back!"

A fantastic paroxysm took possession of the

usually silent and reticent man. He fell upon his knees and prayed, with groans, and cries, and strong wrestlings of the body, as if he could prevail by those. He called aloud upon the shadow to return, and to take form again before his eyes. He bemoaned the loss of his art, as if it had gone from him for ever; while Hester stood at his side, terrified yet brave; willing to welcome this vision, if his prayers should be heard and granted.

No answer came. The pale light fell steadily into the room, but it revealed no apparition. Lawson's voice grew faint, and his sobs feeble; but no spectral messenger came to assuage his passion; and at last worn out and exhausted, he clasped Hester's hand again in his own nerveless fingers, and descended the stairs in silence.

Upon the second floor there was a door of communication between the work-room and the rest of the house, and through this Lawson and Hester passed. A thin line of light from beneath the drawing-room door shone across the farthest end of the passage, and caught Lawson's eye.

"Miss Hester," he whispered, "just let me look into the other room, where the light is—the grand new room, you know."

"She is there," answered Hester, with a shrewd look upon her white face.

"Ah, but your mother may be there as well, who knows?" persisted Lawson: "you open the door quietly, and I'll peep in over your shoulder. I saw her as plain as could be only an hour ago."

Hester led him up to the door of the room where Rose Morley was sitting, and turned the handle with the utmost caution. They gazed in together unheard and unseen. To Hester's surprise, Robert Waldron was no longer there; but Rose sat in her chair before the fire, with her face hidden in her hands, and sobbing in deep-drawn sobs.

Lawson caught his breath, and grasped Hester's hand in a grip of iron; but she did not utter any cry. They stole down-stairs again into the lobby, and then Hester saw upon his face an expression of complete bewilderment and perplexity. Once more he peered into John Morley's dimly lighted room; and then, shaking his head doubtfully, he opened the outer door, through which the snow came drifting in large flakes, and, still with a troubled look upon his face, he bade the child good night and went out into the quiet street.

CHAPTER THE TWELFTH.

DEEPENING SHADOWS.

AGAIN the sunshine had forsaken the home of John Morley, or only visited it in uncertain gleams of fitful brightness. There were seasons when his young wife sought his dull room as if it were a safe refuge, or a holy sanctuary, and sat there silent and inactive in the great antique chair, where Hester's

mother had been wont to sit and watch him with fond eyes, while he worked among his books.

Once or twice, in his great absence of mind, he had spoken to her without looking up, and called her by the other name, still cherished and familiar in his thoughts; and then Rose had started up quickly, and fled from the room, while he had been all unconscious of the blunder of his tongue. It was a very troubled though profound love which John Morley felt for this girl, so much younger both in life and heart than himself; but it struck deeper roots into his nature every day, in part because it was so troubled. Hester's mother had been his equal, and they had confronted the difficulties of life side by side, mutual helpers, with the selfsame thoughts and the selfsame hope in the future. This love, which had possessed the equality of friendship, had been a strength to him—a serene satisfaction, which had been all-sufficing while it was his, but the loss of which had robbed him of even his natural energy and content. But for Rose he took the position of a protector and guardian; he stood before her to shield her from the ills of the future.

There was a great charm and sweetness in this, which had been lacking in the more equal marriage with Hester's mother. Even his anxiety about her spiritual welfare, a little exaggerated by the speculative questions into which his mind naturally ran, invested her with deeper and more fascinating interest; and Rose herself would have been startled, and would have shrunk from him in dread, if she could have looked into her husband's heart, and seen how she engrossed his thoughts, his hopes, and his prayers.

She was standing behind his chair one morning, looking down, he could not see how sadly, upon his bowed head, where white lines were mingling with the dark hair. She laid her hand upon it at last, softly and reverently, and as he turned smilingly to her, he caught the expression, half sorrowful and half frightened, imprinted upon her fair face.

"Why, what ails you, my dear?" he asked, putting his arm about her, while Rose sank down upon her knees beside him; "what is the matter with you, my Rose?"

"Nothing, nothing," she sobbed; "only I am such a silly young thing, and you are so wise and good. There is such a dreadful gulf between us two, and it will always be there, for ever, and ever, and ever; I shall always be silly and wicked, and you will always be wise and good. Oh, why did you ever marry such a creature as I?"

"Why," said John Morley earnestly, "because I loved you with my whole heart; and I love you still more, Rose, if that be possible, now you have been my wife for more than a year. But it was selfish of me—a man's selfishness—and I do not know how to make you happy now you belong to me."

"No, no, no!" cried Rose, "it was not selfish. It was good, too good of you. You said—or you might have said—to yourself, 'Here is a poor, giddy, thoughtless butterfly, just dancing and idling its precious life away; and I, a wise and good man, will take it into my own home, and give all my wisdom and goodness to the task of making it like myself, now and in the world to come.' But you cannot—no, you cannot. I ought never to have been the wife of a good man. I ought never, never to have become the mother of little Hetty."

"Yes, you ought," answered John Morley, stroking the soft hair, and the burning cheek which would have dried up any tears, had any fallen upon it; "my house is not the same since you entered it, Rose. You have made us happy, Hester and me—more happy than we can tell you. Is there anything that troubles you specially, my love? Tell me, and if it be within my power the trouble shall be removed. And if it be not we will pray God together either to take it away, or sanctify it for your good."

"No, there is nothing," answered Rose, kissing his hand again and again, "unless you could take me away from myself, unless you could make me somebody else but the silly, giddy, wicked, good-for-nothing creature I am. If you could make me like Hester's mother! If you could only make me like Hester!"

Her voice died away in sobs, and her tears came in torrents now, while John Morley, distressed and bewildered, could only soothe her, as he would have soothed a child, till the first hysterical paroxysm had passed over, and he could place her in the old easy-chair, and bring some water for her to drink.

She was extremely quiet and subdued during the rest of the day, and remained in the gloomy room with her husband, smiling faintly whenever she caught his anxious eye; but at other times regarding his grave face, and his hair streaked with grey, with an expression of mingled pity and dread.

It was only, in the evening, when Hester's bedtime came, that she quitted her husband's presence to go up-stairs to Hester's room; not to help her in undressing, for the child had been long accustomed to do everything for herself, but to sit watching her, and waiting to kiss her when she was in bed.

When Hester knelt down, Rose bowed her head and clasped her hands, as if joining in the child's inaudible petitions: a sign of grace which would have caused the heart of her husband to throb for joy. She laid her head down upon Hester's pillow with her lips close to her ear, after having put out the light, and spoke to her in the darkness.

"Little Hetty," she said, "would you rather live with good people, or with people you love dearly, dearly?"

Hester answered deliberately, after pausing for

some little time in order to consider the question—

"I don't think I should love any but good people."

"But you love me," pursued Rose, "and I'm not good. Would you rather have me as I am, or a very good mamma, as good as Miss Waldron?"

"Oh, but you are good," persisted Hester, "and I'd rather live with you ten times better than Miss Waldron, however good she is. But if you're not quite, quite good yet, you've only to ask God."

"I have asked him," sobbed Rose, "and I'm more wicked than ever. Oh, Hetty! if you had promised to live with somebody you didn't love, and there came afterwards some one you did love with all your heart, and wanted you to live with them, what would you do, little Hetty?"

Rose's cheek was crimson in the darkness, and her eye was burning, while Hester was silent again for a few minutes, coming to a careful judgment upon the particular case put before her.

"I should be very, very sorry," she answered at last, "but if I'd promised I would keep my promise."

John Morley's second wife said no more to her little step-daughter; but she gave her a kiss as tender as her own mother could have given. Only had there been a light in the room, Hester would have seen a face wan as death, and blue eyes filled with terror, bending over her; and she would not have fallen asleep so peacefully as she did, with pleasant dreams of her new mother.

END OF CHAPTER THE TWELFTH.

MODERN GREECE.

BY PROFESSOR D. T. ANSTED, M.A., F.R.S., ETC.

IN THREE PARTS.—PART THE SECOND.

ATHENS.



ATHENS is altogether a new city, built on a regular plan with wide streets. Its houses are somewhat irregular in point of size, but include some, both in the business streets and in

the outskirts, that would do honour to any capital in Europe. There is still to be seen the old town and market-place at the end of one of the principal streets, but it is pushed into a corner and almost buried by the new buildings, which are, it is true, far less picturesque, but which are certainly much more comfortable.

Many a traveller would make the tour of the city and its antiquities, and leave Athens without knowing of the existence of these mediæval fragments, if it were not that the temple of Æolus and the choragic monument of Lysicrates cannot be reached without passing through at least part of them, and these imperfect but interesting specimens of the real old Athens are rarely omitted from the list of necessary monuments, without seeing which the tourist may not turn his back upon the city of Minerva.

I do not aspire to write a guide-book of Athens, or to speak of it except with a view of showing what Greece has done and is doing. But I may state that there are two main streets crossing at right angles, which include the principal shops, the hotels, and some few buildings. One of these (Hermes Street) enters from the Piræus road and, running eastwards, terminates at the king's palace. It is complete, and not likely to extend at present much farther

towards the Piræus. The other commences at the temple of Æolus under the Acropolis, and runs out towards the north into parts of the town where building is still actively progressing. The main town is within the angle made by the western part of Hermes Street and the northern part of Æolus Street, and almost all the principal modern public buildings, except the palace and the new cathedral, are within this area. It is not very large, but the number of such buildings completed and in progress is so great as to form a very important and interesting subject of contemplation. The principal buildings are well and soundly constructed of stone, and most of them are faced with Pentelic marble.

It is true this marble is not far off, and is very easily quarried, but its use is none the less creditable when the temptation of producing a rapid effect with plaster and cement is fairly considered.

The population of that Athens whose condition in 1833 is described in the opening paragraphs of the last article, is now about 40,000, and is rapidly increasing. The principal streets are all well paved, the flags in front of the houses being laid down at the expense of the owners of the houses, and the roadways are well kept up. The houses bear a high rent; private houses of moderate size let readily at about £10 per month, and hotels and other large business houses in good positions yield from £600 to £800 per annum. There are three principal and first-class hotels in the square of which the royal palace forms one side, and several others in the Æolus Street and elsewhere. The cost of living in the principal hotels is 12 francs per day, without wine, which may be calculated at 150 fr. more. The rooms are of good size, lofty,

and thoroughly well furnished, and the food unexceptionable.

Of the public buildings several have been constructed by the government, but many more by private liberality. The cathedral is very large, lofty, and built on the plan of the Santa Sophia in Constantinople. It is handsomely and well, though not perhaps very richly, decorated, and has but little marble. It has been finished as much as fifteen years, and was therefore one of the first great undertakings of the young government.

Another important church is now nearly completed, scarcely less large and certainly not less creditable as a building. Besides these churches there are several less important, as well of the Greek Church persuasion as Roman Catholic and Protestant. I am sorry to say that a very pretty English church is provided but no clergyman has yet been found to perform regular service in it, although the hotels are crowded with English travellers.

Educational institutions have from the first been among the main objects of interest to the modern Greeks. A very large and convenient, but not very handsome, university was built by the government, and has been long completed and in use; but even this owes much to funds provided by private persons, who have appreciated the importance of its influence on the rising generation. Within the walls of the university is a handsome hall for public ceremonies, in which there is at present the nucleus of a picture gallery, so lately presented by some patriotic foreign Greek, that the pictures are merely laid on the floor against a wall. There are already extensive museums of natural history, rich in local collections, especially of the fossil bones found at Pikermé near Marathon, and described by M. Gaudry. Duplicates of most of these are in Paris, but there are no other similar collections in Europe.

There is a library, which is entirely public in the strictest sense of the word, being open to every one and greatly frequented. It is chiefly provided with Greek books at present, but is constantly receiving additions from all countries and in all languages. English and French books are duly appreciated. This library occupies a long suite of rooms exceedingly well adapted for their purpose, and well lighted. They are lined with a series of marble busts of the distinguished Greeks and friends of Greece. Among them will be found excellent busts of Lord Byron and General Church.

So popular is the university that the number of students is about 1,700 in all faculties, and these are from all parts of the country and of all stations in life. No doubt certain disadvantageous results arise from this large number of educated youths, for few of them go back to their families to renew their ordinary life, the greater number endeavour-

ing to find places under government, which is at the best a half-idle and profitless life to the country.

But the university is by no means the only institution that has been established for purposes of education. Very soon after the country became free, the importance of improving the intellectual condition of the female part of the population was felt, and means were taken to give instruction to the Greek women, especially to young ladies of the middle and higher classes, a matter that had probably never before been thought of in the history of the country. More than twenty years ago a wealthy and patriotic Greek, named Arsakeion, who had himself suffered under Turkish domination, and escaping from his oppressed country had made a large fortune in Russia, left half his property to build and endow an institution for girls.

Some of the students were to be kept as boarders, but there was also to be a department of general education, each pupil paying a small sum for some time; and now there are in this establishment—which occupies a large and handsome building in one of the principal streets near the university—as many as 100 boarders and more than 800 day-pupils. The instruction given is complete, and the age of the pupils ranges from ten to sixteen.

There is a public examination in June, after which a prize, amounting in value to 1,000 drachmas (nearly £40), is given to the most deserving pupil. This also is a private endowment, secured to the establishment perpetually. Besides the Arsakeion, there is a newer institution for orphan girls, where as many as 500 are provided for; and this, also, is the result of a private donation.

There are at least six private girls' schools besides these public establishments, and the education of Greek women thus commenced cannot fail in a few years to produce a marked and very favourable influence on the general manners of the people, among whom hitherto women have been regarded in rather an Oriental light. The mothers will henceforth be in a position to teach their children.

There is, perhaps, some fear lest the energetic efforts made to urge on education to the greatest possible extent may defeat its object, by inducing too early and too great a strain on the intellect of young girls. In one admirably conducted establishment that I visited, there were twenty-four masters and teachers to 150 pupils, and the hours of study, beginning early and ending late, were almost uninterrupted by intervals of relaxation. I was informed that precisely the same system prevailed generally, and although there is a vacation of at least three months in the heats of summer, during which excursions are made and the studies are greatly relaxed, the excessive strain can hardly be safely continued without ultimate injury to physical development. The internal arrangements of the young ladies' schools are simple but efficacious.

Every care is taken, at least with pupils of tender age, to avoid the possibility of any evil from the occasional association of black sheep with the rest of the flock. The dormitories are well arranged, well ventilated, and well superintended. The classrooms are small, and hardly allow sufficient space for the numbers. The scheme of education includes, besides the grammatical study of Greek and a knowledge of Greek literature (including Plato), a careful study of French history, arithmetic, geography, the physical and natural history sciences, music and singing. English and German are commonly taught, but are not obligatory.

Drawing is also taught to those who desire it. Needlework has a place, but not a prominent place, in the day's work. The general management and superintendence of the household forms a part of the practice of the older pupils.

For the instruction of young men there is, besides the university, a college where about 400 lads receive a good education of an ordinary kind. This college was founded by a Greek named Varvakeion, and like so many donations was totally unexpected, and was a kind of thank-offering to Providence for increasing his wealth in a distant land. In all these cases the funds provided have been sufficient to erect a good and handsome building, which is itself an ornament to the city, and also to endow the institution with adequate funds to carry out the required object.

In addition to the public colleges, there are several good private schools for boys; and not only are there all these institutions at Athens, but the Piræus also has its college, a Polytechnic school where all the elements of a sound general education are taught, and where French and English as well as Greek are objects of special interest.

A very interesting building is in process of construction in a part of the town at some distance from the principal streets, but which will soon be reached as the town continues to advance. It is called a Polytechnic school. It is of large size, admirably designed, and built of stone faced with polished Pentelic marble. The object is to give to workmen of all occupations the most intelligent and scientific knowledge of their different trades or employments. The building consists of a centre and two detached wings. The centre will contain collections for use, and reference models, machinery, and no doubt a library. The style is Ionic and the building is well planned for its purpose, well lighted, and well ventilated. The marble columns are polished, and the whole of the work in the best taste. A large sum of money was left for the special purpose of constructing this building, by a rich merchant of the name of Tossitza, who divided his fortune between this institution and his wife. At her death the widow added largely to the donation.

The construction of the building, which, though simple, is elaborate and costly, has gone on steadily; the architect being a distinguished Greek; and the funds have lately fallen short. Within a few months, however, a further contribution of 100,000 drachmas (£4,000) has come in from another merchant living at Taganrog, and more will be forthcoming when necessary. Whenever a good work of this kind has been commenced at Athens, there has always been found some one to carry it through.

Not far from the university a public museum is rising, for the reception of some of the numerous collections pouring in from every side. This also will be a beautiful building. It is being built at the cost of the government.

Immediately adjoining the university an academy (*Academia* in the old meaning of the term) is now in course of construction, and is well advanced towards completion, which cannot but attract the notice of the traveller. It is a temple, dedicated to the Sciences, and built entirely of polished Pentelic marble. No expense has been spared to render it worthy of its site. The design is classical, and the execution good, and the building when completed will be an excellent though somewhat monotonous construction, serving as a public museum of the fine arts. It is built at the expense of one man, the Baron Sinna, a Greek banker of Vienna, who appears prepared to carry out the design to its full end, and complete the museum in the style in which it has been commenced.

The expense of the building under any circumstances must be enormous, and could hardly be undertaken by a government still in need of so many important public works of other kinds, even if the resources of Greece were greater than they now are.

But the Baron Sinna is not content with this. He has now undertaken the collection of documents distributed through Europe, bearing upon the history of his country during the Middle Ages. The gentleman entrusted with so important a work has *carte blanche* to incur any necessary expenses, and is fully qualified to do justice to the object in view. Public spirit exhibited at so great a cost, and in so intelligent a manner, is too rare not to deserve encouragement from all who are capable of giving appreciation to it.

Benevolent institutions have not been neglected among the public works in Athens due entirely to private enterprise. There is a hospital for the blind, accommodating forty patients, and built by subscription. It has, I believe, no permanent endowment, but is in full operation. No one, looking at what has been done in other matters, can doubt for a moment that this also will receive due consideration when the time arrives, and when it ceases to carry out the object in view by the means actually at hand.

The style of the building is very good, and the arrangements are liberal and wise.

There are several poor-houses for the reception of the old and infirm, and beggary is almost unknown in Athens.

In this account of the public institutions of the capital of Greece, due partly to the wise liberality of the government, but much more to the intelligent bounty of wealthy private individuals, who, having made large fortunes, have divided them between their country and their family, I have confined myself to the more important of those either completed or nearly ready for their appointed use. There are other bequests not less considerable, and of very recent date. Thus, a convenient temporary building was erected in the large open space near the ruins of the great temple of Jupiter, which served to receive and display a number of objects of home and foreign manufacture sent for exhibition last year.

For the city of Athens would not be behind any European capital in this respect, and it has had an exhibition of works of art and industry, which was in its way a complete success. The building was essentially temporary, and must be removed; but the idea once given, a wealthy patriot, appreciating the advantage of such exhibitions, has given a large sum for the purpose of preparing a more permanent exhibition.

The same gentleman—whose name, Sappa, deserves to be recorded—has given a large sum to assist in the promotion of national games resembling the old Olympic games, under the conviction that such cultivation of the physical powers was desirable and useful.

The ancient Stadium, where the great Olympic games were formerly conducted, has been to some extent cleared out, and the money left by Mr. Sappa is partly devoted to prizes for the successful competitors in these games. The whole amount given by Mr. Sappa is 600,000 drachmas (£23,000), a part of which having been invested to give prizes at the annual games, the rest will be spent on the exhibition building. "And no doubt in case of need more money will be forthcoming, either from the same quarter or from some other person.

A modern theatre has been considered necessary to complete the attractions of the Queen of Cities. The money has been subscribed, and before long this new theatre will be one of the ornaments of the town.

Wherever, in fact, a need has arisen and been publicly recognised, some wealthy son either of modern Greece, as now constituted, or of those provinces still subject to Turkey—whose inhabitants feel perhaps more vividly their true nationality when it can only be expressed in this way, and who willingly sacrifice the money they have earned in foreign commerce to advance the interests of

their nation, with whom they yearn to ~~claim~~ brotherhood in every manner—has always hitherto been found ready to subscribe largely and in full proportion to his means.

It is only by looking on matters in this way that we can account for the variety and excellence of the institutions and buildings, that cannot but astonish the traveller whose idea of Greece has been derived from the gloomy accounts, limited chiefly to stories of brigandage, that find their way into the newspapers.

As a very curious example of the manner in which this love of country sometimes shows itself, an instance may be mentioned that occurred only within a few months. A respectable and moderately wealthy butcher of Athens, who had few private claims on his liberality, has left 100,000 drachmas (nearly £4,000) of his hard-earned savings to his country, to advance the public interests in reference to the Fleet.

Many other similar instances might also be quoted, and it is evident that the modern Greek looks on his country as his natural heir in the absence of more pressing claims. I am informed that few weeks pass without more or less of such legacies being announced.

Such are some of the results of the liberation of Greece, as shown in Athens under the shadow of the Acropolis. A large, flourishing, and important city has arisen in the course of thirty years on the site of the few miserable ruins left by the Turks. This city is not built hurriedly, and of slight materials that will soon pass away. The chief buildings are permanent and in excellent taste, and would be regarded as ornaments in any city in the world. They have been built not by exhausting taxes, whose only object has been to decorate the capital at the expense of the provinces, but by private donations sent by men who loved their country, and many of whom, born in provinces where the foreigner still rules, have taken this touching means to express their affection and their hopes. The buildings thus constructed are not only ornamental, but are designed to accomplish purposes of the highest national utility.

Besides the buildings alluded to, there is one in progress for the meetings of the Chamber of Deputies, several hospitals have been constructed, and public gardens and squares have been laid out. There is also an excellent botanic garden. The national monuments of which Athens has reason to be so proud—the grandest ruins of the greatest works ever executed by man—have been carefully superintended and respected, and it is in contemplation to remove some of the mediæval excrescences that have grown around them, and preserve them as far as possible from further decay. There is, indeed, a department of the government whose duty it is to watch over these sacred relics.

A LITTLE LANE.



"AS WHEN WE BOTH WERE TRUE AND YOUNG

IF I could see that little lane,
 Such miles away,
 If I could walk there once again,
 Now it is May,
 Ah ! how my heart would long for you !
 What tears would fall !
 Once to feel young again and true
 I would give all

My future life ! But tell me, dear,
 Tell me, art thou
 Sad too sometimes for that lost year ?
 It is May now ;
 The little lane with roses hung,
 Such miles away,
 As when we both were true and young,
 Blooms fair to-day.

A MYSTERY.

IN THREE CHAPTERS.—CHAPTER THE SECOND.



I FOUND on inquiry that the inquest had been opened that day, but nothing was elicited beyond what I already knew, and the inquiry was adjourned for a week at the request of the police inspector, who said he expected to obtain some important evidence within that time. The only witnesses examined were the old servant, the constable whom she called in, the doctor, and a neighbour, whose evidence to the effect that he had heard a noise of groaning about half-past eleven seemed to fix the time when the deed was committed; but the mystery of the closed door and window remained unexplained.

I found there was a good deal of excitement in the neighbourhood, not caused so much by the atrocity of the murder, for there was nothing in that exceptional, but by the mystery attending it; and as I sat in the inn parlour that night, I was amused by the wild conjectures that were started first by one and then by another. Chance had so far favoured me in that I found I could not have chosen a better resting-place than that inn, as it was a place of resort for many of those who lived in Crawley Street, and among others of the neighbour who had given evidence at the inquest.

I had not been five minutes in the room before I was aware of this fact, for he was evidently proud of it, and was never weary of rehearsing the questions that had been put to him and the answers he had given. "Says the Crowner to me, 'Was you sure it was half arter eleven?' 'Perfect sure,' says I. 'And why?' says he. 'Becos I heard the chimnes just arterwards,' says I. And then they told me to stand down."

This man, John Martin by name (professionally known as Giovanni Martini), who described himself as Professor of Gymnastics, was a small, mild, anxious-looking man, with a little chirping voice; he appeared quite happy at the sudden notoriety that had fallen upon him, but happy in a modest way. On hearing I was connected with the press, he introduced himself to me, with the information that he was engaged at a place of amusement; that he was desirous of distinguishing himself in the metropolis if he could get a chance, but had hitherto failed; and that he would take it as a great favour if I would come and see his performance, when he had no doubt I should be able to give him a good notice in my paper. With that he slipped a free admission into my hand, which he informed me was available for any night; but as I had not come there for pleasure but business, I put the ticket

in my pocket without any intention of using it; however I improved the occasion by asking him a few questions, and found that he occupied the upper floor of No. 9, Crawley Street, and his room adjoined that in which Mr. Hartley slept.

That was the result of my first day's experience as a detective, and it was not much certainly, but then my work did not really begin until the next day. The funeral was to take place in the morning, and as soon after that as possible I determined to make an inspection of the room, having faith in my card to obtain me this privilege, and indeed I found it to be a talisman that admitted me wherever I chose to go.

The police, who had hitherto found nothing in the room to assist, seemed to be of opinion that they might do so, for they had preserved it in the same state as at first and kept the door locked; however my talisman unlocked it and I was allowed to look where I would, but to move nothing, to insure which last injunction a policeman accompanied me in the ostensible character of guide.

I soon ascertained that there were only three means of entrance to the room—the door, the window, and the chimney. My first idea had been that after the fatal wound had been given and the murderer escaped, the old man in a state of terror and frenzy had succeeded in reaching the door and locking it, with a vague intention of putting that barrier between him and the burglar, and had then crawled back to bed and there died; but the medical evidence disposed of that surmise, so having ascertained beyond a doubt that the door was locked on the inside, I dismissed that means of exit.

I next examined the chimney, but the register was fastened down with a stout iron bar, and had been so for some time, the servant informed me; so there only remained the window, of which I made a careful inspection, to the great amusement of the constable.

"You will do no good there," he said; "our people know what they are about, and have gone over every square inch of the room, and I may tell you they don't take much account of the window. Why, it stands to reason that no one could get up fifty feet or more of straight brick wall. The door and the chimney one looks to naturally, but the window—well, the thing's impossible, as you may see for yourself."

Seeing for myself was the very thing I meant to do, and I noted two things while the policeman was speaking: that the spring of the fastener was broken, and that about the hinge of the fastener was what appeared to be a piece of tow.

"I suppose there is no objection to my opening the window," I said; "I want to see the height from the ground."

"You'll not want to look twice," the policeman replied, and with that permission I undid the bolt, observing that it worked very easily for want of the spring, and threw up the window. I own I was disappointed, for I had hoped to find an out-house whose roof would have afforded some means of reaching the window, but it was as the policeman said a sheer descent; and he, seeing my blank expression, smiled. Right and left were the zinc water-pipes, but too far from the window for any one to have ascended by them; about four feet below me ran a projecting cornice of brick, about an inch and a half wide, broken away in parts, and scarcely affording foothold for a cat; it seemed to me very rotten, and patched here and there with something white as though the mortar had crumbled down upon it; or the spots might, I thought, be damp-stains; the wall was otherwise unbroken, and had apparently at one time a vine trained up it, as I observed the nail-holes in the mortar. There was a paved yard at the back of the house, and beyond that a huge warehouse.

"Nothing there," said the policeman as I shut down the window.

"Nothing there," I replied, "and now I should like to inspect the escritoire that was broken open."

This was a plain stained deal piece of furniture, fitted up with drawers and pigeon-holes, and with a sloping front secured with a lock; the marks of the instrument with which it had been forced open were very distinct, the wood being soft; some of these were sharp and square, others jagged and diagonal.

There being nothing more to be seen, I returned to my inn, where I made a careful memorandum of all I had observed, and was obliged to confess to myself that it was not much. The only conclusions at which I had arrived were two, namely, that the entry had been made by the window, and that the chisel with which the desk had been forced had broken during the operation, which accounted for the inequality of the marks.

There were two things that led me to the conclusion I have mentioned concerning the window. In the first place, it was the only possible entrance; in the second place, it did not appear very difficult to bolt it after leaving, owing to the absence of the spring, and consequent looseness of the fastening. The little bit of tow-like stuff had suggested the mode of doing this to me; I supposed that it had been effected by a piece of string passed over the bolt, and the two ends brought outside through the crack between the sashes, then upon these being pulled the bolt would at once be returned to its place and the string withdrawn, but upon this with-

drawal it had left the tell-tale piece of tow sticking in the joint of the hasp.

I was rather pleased with that discovery, but was still as far as ever from the object of my inquiry, namely, who was the guilty man? and the only thing was to proceed systematically. I and the police were working at different ends of the question, and besides my natural desire to clear my friend from the charge, I was also animated by a sense of rivalry that sharpened my wits wonderfully. They had marked down a man, and were striving to follow the clue from him up to the crime; I on my part marked down the crime, and strove to follow the clue from that to the man; in other words, they were working from a theory, I was working from a fact, and very desirous of proving that my system was the right one.

In pursuance of my plan, having now discovered, as I imagined, the place of entry, the next thing to be done was to find out how the murderer could have got there, and this was a difficult question. I made inquiries at the warehouse in the rear, and found that was closed every night at nine o'clock, so that there would be no one to overlook the back of Crawley Street. I measured with my eye the distance from the warehouse to the fatal window, and was satisfied that no one could have effected a communication between the two; I thought of the water-pipes, I thought of the narrow cornice, but could find no solution to the problem, and was getting very despondent.

So the week passed, and I was present at the adjourned inquest. Ormerod was also there, very nervous and agitated; but I carefully avoided meeting his eye, as I feared that in his present state he would forget the caution I had given him, and make some sign of recognition. The whole of the proceedings that day assumed the form of an accusation against my friend, and the police seemed quite confident that they had got their man. The old servant was recalled to prove at what time he left Crawley Street, the waiter to prove at what time he returned to the inn, and then came the most damaging piece of evidence of all—a note which old Hartley had received the very day of the murder was traced to Ormerod. The latter, who was now terribly agitated, insisted upon making a statement, the first part of which was all very well, being simply an explanation of how that note came into his possession, it being a part of the money his uncle had given him, but the last part completed the case of suspicion already raised against him—he could not tell the real reason for his absence that night, so he told a lie about it, and so transparent a lie that it was disproved at once.

The verdict was "Wilful murder against John Ormerod," and he was committed on the coroner's warrant.

Cruel Hours.

Words by S. H. GATTY.

Music by ALFRED SCOTT GATTY.

Andante moderato

PIANO.

1. It was
2. It was

one day in the sum - mer, As I lin - ger'd by her side, That, re -
one day in the fall - ing, When her gen - tle life had flown, That, old

- proach - ful, and com - plain - ing, We thus the hours did chide:— "O
me - mo - ries re - call - ing, I thus chid the hours a - lone:— "O

Con molto express.

cru - el hours, so swift - ly fly-ing, What have we done to
cru - el hours, so slow - ly creeping, What have I done to

frighten you a-way? Leave us not here, our happiness de - ny - ing; Why
make you linger so? Why are ye thus me from my darling keep - ing? Go

will ye go, nor suf - fer us to stay?
fast - er yet, your-selves, and let me go!

8

A VISIT TO THE PYRAMIDS.

BY SIR FREDERICK ARROW.



SIX o'clock in the morning found us on the quay at Suez jetty. Even at that early hour we were by no means the only strangers out, and for the next two hours there was a continual accession to our numbers. The only thing that did not arrive was the train, which we fondly hoped was to land us at Cairo by two p.m. Blank dismay was apparent on most faces. The ladies seemed the most cheery, though, to look at their stupendous boxes, with a ball in prospect at night, and apparently small hopes of getting there, they might well have been pardoned if they had given way to their feelings. Not an official was to be seen. The office was open, but no one there, and the only news heard was an alarming rumour that we were to wait until two "specials" for ambassadors had been sent off. However we were spared that subject of complaint, and at last, about nine a.m., a train was seen coming down from the town.

Hardly had it stopped when it was carried by storm; entreaties, supplications, and threats of the staff, who had arrived in it, were of no avail. In a minute every corner was crowded—luggage anywhere, or nowhere—there we were, and there we meant to stop. At last we moved off, but our barometer, which had been rising, experienced a rapid fall when we found ourselves backed into the Suez station, where two trains, equally full, were waiting.

How we got off at last I have no idea, but after considerable delay we all started, our train being the last. What were the rules which regulated the traffic, or what they meant to do with us after all, seemed equally incomprehensible. Sometimes they would shunt the leading trains and let us pass ahead, reversing the operation at the next station; and what they stopped at all for was a mystery, unless it was to give the natives an opportunity of extracting "baksheesh," and the wearied traveller a chance of getting a glass of water, or an orange at about ten times its customary value.

When we started again there was the most delightful jumble, as this was the junction for Alexandria. Very few, if any, wanted to go there; but some did go, as I heard afterwards, against their will. At last we got fairly off, and bending back again to the southward, passed through a country as rich and fertile as the neighbouring Desert was arid and barren, until, just before sunset, the Pyramids of Ghizeh met the eye, and many of my fellow-travellers, like myself, looked upon them for

the first time with wonder and admiration, mixed with awe, as their sharp outlines stood out in strong relief against the evening sky.

The waning twilight soon shut them from our gaze, and at six o'clock we glided into the station at Cairo. How and why we arrived when we did is more than I can tell; however, the blind goddess stuck by us to the last, and my friend and I found ourselves at half-past six sitting down to a capital dinner at one of the best hotels in Cairo—the Hôtel de l'Orient, for which we had a billet—while lots of our fellow-travellers were still *en route*.

Many did not arrive till ten p.m., and others kept dropping in until next morning; some of them even had to wander about without anywhere to put their heads, every place being full. We had a fight for the luggage, not with the railway porters—for the best of all reasons, that there are no such functionaries—but with the drivers and donkey-boys, and ultimately we walked to our hotel with our possessions on two donkeys, and a large retinue clamorous for baksheesh. The hotel was so full that they could not give us a room to sleep in, every place even to the floors of the saloon being allotted; but they promised one for the morrow, and a room near at hand could be secured in a private house if we liked to pay ten francs a-piece for a bed—but of this more anon. We at once accepted the bargain, and took possession in the course of the evening.

It was up a huge gateway, in a very narrow and particularly noisy bazaar; but as there were mosquito-curtains, and it was tolerably clean, we thought ourselves very well off. The landlady was a hideous old Frenchwoman, with a fat and rather bedizened daughter.

I spent some long days this week—this was a day and a half, and very glad I was to crawl under my curtains; but, though I defeated the machinations of the mosquitoes to keep me awake, a band in the bazaar did murder sleep for a long time. Either exhausted nature or exhausted trumpeters at last allowed me a few precious moments, and it really did not seem as if I had had half an hour's rest when a wretched dragoon stumbled into our room—at half-past four, 22nd November—to say the noble steeds were at the door, destined to bear us, under his guidance, to the Pyramids.

There was nothing for it but to growl and go.

The coldest part of the night comes, they say, just before dawn, and certainly there was no deviation from the rule on this particular morning, for it was very cheerless. As we approached the Nile, a raw fog came rising off its waters into the narrow

streets and lanes of the suburb which connects Cairo with the river.

It was just getting into a grey twilight when we reached the river, which we had to cross in a boat. There was a ferry apparently, as there was an office where tolls were taken, and the usual scene which takes place when money passes between Egyptians occurred—a regular row, in which our dragoman, the toll-collector, and innumerable boatmen took part. How they settled it I cannot say, but I think the dragoman had the best of it; and, after some time, ourselves and our donkeys together, four Italians and their steeds, were safely embarked in one of the ordinary large-decked boats of the river.

With considerable noise we shoved off into the stream, and were in due time safely landed on the other side, the donkeys showing a decided preference for getting out of rather than into the boat. This was our first sight of the Nile, and although not, perhaps, altogether to its advantage, the grey light of the early morning gave it an appearance of vagueness and size which a later view dispelled.

Before, however, we got fairly *en route* again, the first beams of the sun were beginning to disperse the gloom, bringing into light more distant points, which had been hitherto undefinable, the building enclosing the Nilometer and the adjacent palace forming prominent objects in the landscape.

After passing through a village and a grove of palms, we crossed the railway to Upper Egypt, and got into a capital new road, which the Viceroy had made to enable his guests to go to the Pyramids with more ease than the state of the country—still partially covered by the receding inundation—would otherwise have allowed. There was, in fact, on the top of an embankment, some thirty feet wide, a regular road, with trees planted on either side, along which our donkeys went very cheerily, my quad, with fifteen stone on his back, going quite at his ease.

The distance from the river to the Pyramids is about five miles, over a flat, fertile country, in which they form the principal feature. Without architectural beauty there is something very striking in their appearance, and when full in view they grow upon you till at their base you realise their grandeur and immensity; looking up at them they are overwhelming, and though shorn of their earliest splendour (for originally they were cased with white marble), there is something very imposing and grand in their simplicity. They seem the very personification of power, and, strange and mysterious like their unknown history, they impress the visitor with awe and wonder. How little, indeed, is known about them! They have stood for four thousand years, and may, if time lasts, stand as much longer, for no signs of decay are visible,

except where man's curiosity has interfered with their original integrity. Who built them? What appliances had they for transporting and lifting such enormous masses? Where were the science and skill attained which gave such mechanical strength and accurate fitting? and, above all, for what purpose were they erected?

Such were one's musing thoughts, and such have been the thoughts of thousands—perhaps millions—who have beheld them with even less knowledge than the scientific research of the last fifty years has brought to light. I could almost go with Piazzi Smyth, who assigns the Great Pyramid to Divine agency, although I can hardly follow him in his views as to its being a standard of weights and measures, though in his book he has very charmingly wrought out the theory. The astronomical part of his view is especially interesting.

The inside of the Pyramid is as wonderful as the outside; the inclination of the passages, the concealed but perfectly ventilated King's Chamber, with the porphyry bath, or sarcophagus, if it may be so called; the wonderful finish of the masonry; the security of access—all instance some great purpose, and the mind is lost in conjecture as to what it may have been. One thing alone seems clear: whatever that purpose was, it fulfils it still: perhaps—although it may be presumptuous to say so in an age like this—only to be known in that day “when all secrets shall be revealed.”

Any lengthened description of the Pyramids, and of the temples below the level of their base which have been excavated in late years, is as much beyond me as it is unnecessary, there being many standard works in which they have been described and fully discussed.

I must not omit to mention the Sphinx. I was really very much struck with it; and it seemed to me a fitting accompaniment to the place, couching at the feet as a guard to its wondrous companions; but I could not by any means realise the glowing descriptions that have been written about the sublime repose and mysterious beauty of the face.

It wants, I suppose, a more poetical imagination than I possess, and I was very much inclined to laugh, remembering what I had read, and contrasting it with what I saw.

It was past ten o'clock when my friend and I sat down to make our breakfast, under the shade of one of the angular sides of the Great Pyramid, and we agreed that we had been well repaid for our early ride.

If we could only have got rid of the Arabs, we should have been happy; but these vagabonds destroy one's pleasure: from the time of a traveller's arrival until his departure, there is one incessant round of quarrelling and attempt at extortion. Not content with the authorised plunder through their sheikh, their whole object is by worry-

ing, or bullying, to get an additional payment as *baksheesh* to themselves individually.

Our dragoman wisely advised us to leave our money at home, and stipulated that we should make no payments except through him, and by this arrangement, and firmness of bearing (with some help perhaps from the sight of a stout ash stick I usually carry), we at last got rid of them, the appearance of some fresh victims, who arrived as we were preparing to mount, accelerating their departure.

If Ismail would only exterminate these Ishmaelites, as his grandfather did the Mamlooks, I do not think any one would object.

The route affords a very good idea of the cultivated country of Lower Egypt, and of the importance and wonderful effect of the inundation of the Nile. Canals and water-courses crossed in every direction, and wherever the waters had receded sufficiently to give a footing, fellahs were to be seen splashing through the soft alluvial soil, sowing seed broadcast.

The deposit looks like rich black mud, and wherever it covers the sand a bog-like earth is formed, resembling the stuff we put into garden-beds for azaleas and rhododendrons. Cotton and sugar-cane, with maize and Indian corn, seemed to be the principal crops in cultivation, while the quantity of date-palms told of the land of the Arab and the Desert. We recrossed the river much as we had crossed, except in having to pole up a long way against the current, to enable us to fetch our landing on the other side. Some little difficulty about the *entrée*, and the wish to get back pretty early, prevented our visiting the Nilometer.

They say it is now just as Herodotus described it, but (though three thousand years is a respectable antiquity) it is a juvenile compared to the Pyramids of Ghizch. We were very glad to get to the hotel about one, but too tired to go to the races held in the afternoon at the Abassich on the edge of the Desert.

The Viceroy and his guests were there, but it was a very tame affair: a feeble copy of a French meeting, which is not saying much for it. The only fun was a dromedary-race, and that, as the pace was only about six miles an hour, was not very exciting. A far more animating scene took place when my friend went to remove his traps to the hotel from our lodging, mine having come quietly beforehand. The question of payment for our night's lodging was not raised until his were removed. The old Frenchwoman demanded five pounds instead of a napoleon, and, assisted by the stout daughter, tried to impound the portmanteaus.

At last, after a pitched battle, my friend, assisted by the dragoman (who had hovered on the skirts of the fight), issued triumphant with bag and baggage, leaving the old lady on the floor, and the

young one shouting for the police. He had, indeed, some fear of the *cadi*; but the landlord of the hotel, who made the bargain, went in and settled the matter.

The evening was spent in rambling about the bazaars, brilliant with illuminations, and with an hour at the opera, to which the Khedive and his guests went in state. It was a very elegant and commodious house, said to have cost £80,000, and there was a tolerable opera and a very good ballet. I did not stay long, for after forty-three hours of excitement, out of which three only had been spent in bed, I felt the want of rest, and enjoyed my capital bed and very comfortable apartment at the *Hôtel de l'Orient*, in which I was now located.

I remained for three days longer at Cairo, and saw all the usual sights—Joseph's Well, the Tombs of the Khalifs, the Museum at Boulak, the Great Mosque, the scene of the destruction of the Mamlooks; but my great delight was the quaint, thoroughly Eastern bazaars, and the magnificent view from the Imambarrah, to which I went every afternoon to see the sun set.

I hoped to have accomplished a visit to the ancient Heliopolis, the Ruins of Memphis, and the Pyramids of Sakarah, but from the state of the country was unable to accomplish it, the roads being generally broken up by the inundation. From the citadel one could see how generally this affects the country.

The view was indeed exceedingly interesting. In one unbroken sweep for three parts of the circle you see a highly cultivated country intersected in every direction with canals, the Nile flowing in a grand volume across it; the city itself, with its picturesque mosques and countless minarets, forming an inside ring, as it were, of which your standpoint is the centre. In the distance beyond the Nile loomed up the gigantic forms of the Pyramids, and as far as the eye could reach in the middle distance were the smaller and more numerous Pyramids of Sakarah. Behind you the panorama was closed by a range of sand-hills, bringing the Desert up to the very gates of Cairo.

The most beautiful effect, however, was that of the setting sun, throwing its slanting beams on the towers and minarets of the city, lighting up the scene with a rosy glow, and the extraordinary appearance given by it to the Pyramids themselves.

As the sun set, its edge almost touched the Great Pyramid, and the change from the flood of crimson light in which they glowed, showing each line and angle with wonderful accuracy, to a black sombre mass, as the sun sank below the horizon, was very striking. Those who have seen an Egyptian sunset will realise how charming the scene was. I was never tired of it, and went every day to enjoy its beauties, and to wish that Turner could have made of it a study.

HESTER MORLEY'S PROMISE.

BY HESBA STRETTON,

AUTHOR OF "THE DOCTOR'S DILEMMA," ETC. ETC.

CHAPTER THE THIRTEENTH.

A GREAT GULF.

A FEW days after this singular conduct on the part of Rose Morley, she received a letter, informing her that a distant relative, residing a long way from

and down the habitation, and locked them up in the drawing-room, which, as we know, had been renovated and furnished expressly for her own use.

In this way there was no vestige left of her late presence in the home, except an ominous and most



"NO, NEVER!" HE CRIED.

Little Aston, was upon the point of death, and wished to see her once more. John Morley opposed no obstacle to the fulfilment of this desire, and gave his wife every assistance in his power. Her arrangements for her absence were very peculiar. She gathered together every small possession of her own, every little trace of her dwelling there, scattered up

mournful void. When John Morley entered his chamber for the first time after her departure, he started, with a vague and sudden fright, at its emptiness; and his eyes sought in vain for some token of his young wife. There was the same sense of dreary chillness as when all the mementoes of Hester's mother had been cleared away from the

place which was to know her no more. Throughout the whole house it was the same ; there was no hint left that Rose had ever been one of its inmates, except that an ever-growing gloom of absence and abandonment seemed to hang over every apartment.

In his undefined uneasiness he thought of comforting himself with a glance at the bright room which was all hers ; but the door did not yield to his touch. It was locked, and the key taken away. The servant, who had some secret suspicions of her own, stole to the door after her master had left it, and put her eye to the key-hole. There was no ray of light in the room, though it was full day ; it followed therefore, as a natural inference, that Mrs. John Morley had closed the shutters, and drawn the thick curtains, before she carried away the key, to insure no intrusion into her room during her absence.

She had set out early in the morning, and the day, long and dull, dragged heavily past, both for John Morley and Hester. From time to time her husband traced her journey, saying, "Now she is at such a place ; at this hour she is waiting at such a station." As evening drew on he sat down to write his first letter to her, a tender yet stately letter, with none of the unmeaning expressions which a man of another stamp might have used.

It was an epistle fit for publication, choice and elegant in its phrases ; but it was no other than the transcript of his own orderly and elevated mind. Being also a religious man, writing to his wife, who would read the letter at the death-bed of a fellow-mortal, he added some thoughts, solemn, earnest, and devout, which surely could not fail to touch the heart of hearts even of a giddy and careless girl.

And his Rose was not that, he said to himself, with a quick and rare moisture of the eyes, as he recalled her kneeling at his side only a few days ago, with her humble confession of unworthiness ; and from the very depths of his soul there went up a fresh cry to God, one of thousands, that he would turn the heart of his wife towards himself.

He directed the cover of his letter with a sort of pride in the characters which ran from his pen, "Mrs. John Morley." She bore his name, and belonged to him. The old glow came back as when in former days he had written the same name, though to another person.

His wife !

Wherever she went, or whoever admired her, she was still Mrs. John Morley. Good man as he was, he felt as much pride in her attractions as a more worldly husband would have done. It was not at all less sweet to him to think of her gaining homage and favour by her beauty and winsome ways.

While he was writing to her the house did not seem quite so empty ; there was, as it were, an affirmation that she had been there, and would be

there again in a few days. There was a fine pleasure in having to indite one of his letters to her, and above all in addressing it to Mrs. John Morley. The man had a whole world of unconscious egotism in him.

He was called away abruptly from this agreeable duty by the intrusion of some country-folk, who had come to ask his counsel concerning some question which perplexed them. It was no unusual occurrence with him. Next to the rector—who also was a bookish man, and often condescended to enter his shop, though there was a church bookseller living in the square—John Morley was reckoned the wisest man to be met with for ten miles round the town, whether in questions of law, physic, or religion. He was, moreover, more courteous than a doctor, less crafty than a lawyer, and more liberal than a priest. Whatever might be the vexed topic of the day, it was necessary to discuss it with the well-read bookseller, and to see what new light he could throw upon it. It was a homage palatable to John Morley, even when paid to him by gaping rustics.

But to-day, even while he listened, and advised, and adjudged, there was a calm, sweet undercurrent of thought, following his young wife in the progress of her day's journey.

When the hour came for closing the shop, it brought also the time appointed for attending a week-night service at his chapel. He posted his letter on the way, with a silent blessing in his heart upon her who should open it. An unusual fervour was kindled in his spirit. He saw close at hand the answer to his many prayers. Rose would come back to him from the solemn death-bed she was gone to witness, changed just as he would wish her to be changed, not in sweetness of temper, nor even in buoyancy of spirits, but weaned from the world, and purged from earthly tastes and longings.

He almost regarded this death as being expressly ordained for the conversion of his wife. Wrapped up in the vivid realisation of the scene now being enacted before her eyes, the words of the old preacher fell unheeded upon his ears, and when the hour's service was ended, he awoke from his reverie with a start of surprise.

Mr. Waldron joined him on his way home, and having a subject of church discipline to discuss, in which they were both interested, he entered the house with him. A tacit and cool intimacy, rather closer than a mere acquaintanceship, had sprung up between them of late, which both would probably have been slow to admit. John Morley, on the one hand, a scholarly, studious man, whose whole life had been given to dipping into varied studies ; and David Waldron, on the other, a hard-headed Parliamentary debater, caring little for general literature, but living his public life for the sole purpose

of protecting and advancing the interests of his denomination. Sometimes the latter picked up thoughts and arguments from John Morley, which told well in his own brief but weighty utterances in the House. So Mr. Waldron sat down familiarly upon the bookseller's hearth, and foot to foot and elbow to elbow discussed with him the questions which interested him most.

The two men were so utterly absorbed in their conversation that neither of them heard a gentle rap, which was repeated two or three times before the door was pushed open, and Hester appeared on the threshold. The little girl had been undressed, but she had put on her frock over her night-gown, and slipped her bare feet into her shoes. She stood still in the doorway of her father's room, holding a letter in her hand. It was a more extraordinary apparition in the eyes of John Morley than of Mr. Waldron.

"What is the matter, Hester?" asked her father hurriedly.

"Come in, Hetty," said Mr. Waldron; "come here, and speak to me. Why, I've had a little girl of my own, so you need not be frightened at me."

Hester advanced into the room, and shook hands with the great man; and then she went on to her father's side with the letter she was carrying.

"Father," she said, "I was just getting into bed when I found this letter on the pillow, and a slip of paper with it telling me to give it to nobody but you. So I thought I'd better bring it down-stairs to you at once."

It was directed to him in his wife's handwriting, but for an instant his mind was full of the argument with which he had been about to reply to Mr. Waldron. The child lingered at his side, with her eyes fastened upon the letter, waiting for him to open it; but not until he had finished his reasoning, and brought it to a triumphant climax, did he rise from his chair and take the letter to the lamp to read it.

"Hester," said Mr. Waldron, by way of improving the occasion, and speaking a word in season, "do you ever forget to say your prayers before you go to bed?"

"No," answered Hester, with a look of surprise, "never. Do you, Mr. Waldron?"

It is possible that he did. At any rate he did not reply with the same promptitude that Hester had done, and he answered only by another question.

"What have you prayed for to-night?" he asked.

"I asked God to-night," answered Hester, "to be good to all very wicked people, and change their hearts: robbers, you know, and everybody who is very wicked."

The colour mantled the child's earnest face, as she gazed pensively and somewhat mournfully into the fire. She had pushed back her hair behind her small white ears, and stood motionless, with her

arms drooping and her head bent in an attitude of dejection and melancholy, which touched even Mr. Waldron's blunt nature. He was searching for something to say which should chase the gloom from her childish face—when, all at once, without sound or sign beforehand, John Morley fell heavily to the ground.

It was as if some mighty invisible hand had struck him down with a blow. He had fallen backwards, and lay apparently lifeless upon the floor, grasping tightly in his fingers the letter which he had been reading. His face, always pale, had lost all that looked like life, and from under his half-closed eyelids the glazed eyes showed themselves without lustre or consciousness. In an instant Hester was on her knees beside him—neither helpless nor frightened, as other children might have been, but with the sad self-possession of a woman. She raised her father's head, and placed under it her little arm, looking up pitifully into Mr. Waldron's face.

"The servant!" cried Mr. Waldron, running to the door; "we must send for the doctor, Hester."

"There is nobody in the house but me," she answered, "unless Lawson is up-stairs in the top room. Martha is gone out this evening."

"What can I do?" he exclaimed, running back again, and stooping over the lifeless man; "I cannot leave you alone. Is it a fit of any kind, Hester?"

"I don't know," she said, "but please put your arm here, while I look if Lawson is up-stairs." He did as she bade him, and she darted swiftly out of the room. Mr. Waldron's eyes strayed from the pallid face resting upon his arm to the half-unfolded letter still gripped firmly in John Morley's stiffened hand. He had neither wish nor intention to read it, but three or four words caught his eye unawares, which sent the blood out of his shrewd, hard face, and set his calm, honest heart beating heavily, like the blows of a sledge-hammer. He drew towards him a cushion and hassock, and rested John Morley's insensible head against them; while with some difficulty he loosened the closed fingers, and released the letter. In his turn he carried it to the lamp, and held it with a shaking hand to the light. It began abruptly:

"I am the most wicked and shameful woman you ever knew. Oh! why was I born so wicked? or why didn't I die when I was only a little child like Hetty?"

"How good you were to me the other day! You suffered me to kneel at your feet, and kiss your hand—only you did not know how wicked I was; and all the day long, while I sat looking at you, you never lifted up your head without a kind word and a smile for me—your head, which is going grey, and ought to be held in honour by everybody about you. Oh! why did you not choose a wife who

could not have been so wicked as to bring dishonour upon you? You are so good and wise—only not wise in loving a shameful thing like me. It is all like a dream—a very horrible and dreadful dream, from which I can never awake and find that it is only a wicked dream. If I could only be what I was when you married me! If I could only be what I was three months ago! If I could only have seen beforehand how I was being led on—how we were both being led on by Satan—oh! I should have turned back quickly, and found a shelter by your side. But it is too late now—for ever!

"I have gathered up everything which could remind you of me, and if I could I would have destroyed that room, which was mine and which must remain under your roof. I did ask God if he could not destroy it, as he destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah.

"I do not go away to be happy. I go away because to stay longer in your home is to be guilty of a greater wrong against you. Robert takes me away with no thought of being happier, but because he can do nothing else. Oh! I pity you; I am angry for you; I could smite myself to death, if that would do you good. But after death is the judgment, and I am afraid of that judgment.

"Oh! why did you marry me? Hester told me once how his father, Robert's father, came to you, and exhorted you not to marry a godless woman. Yet you did. There was nothing in common between us. You took me out of the old, merry, careless life, and brought me into a new one, one where I could scarcely breathe. It was all gloom, and darkness, and silence to me, till Robert came, and then there was a light which dazzled me, and I saw nothing. And now there is complete darkness, that utter darkness into which the outcasts are driven.

"Oh, God!"

"Oh, God!" echoed Mr. Waldron, with a groan. There was no other word added to Rose Morley's letter, and no other cry was uttered by the lips of the man who read it. He laid it down and tried to think, but his usually clear brain was in a maze, and his confused thoughts resolved themselves again into the same simple, deep, unfathomable cry which left everything to be divined by the heavenly Helper; and once more his quivering lips breathed, "Oh, my God!"

"What is the matter?" asked a voice beside him, and turning his gaze away from the letter in his hand, he saw Hester at his elbow, straining her eyes to read her step-mother's writing. Lawson was looking on with a wild, half-crazy expression, and he too came forward as Mr. Waldron remained silent and stupefied.

"What is the matter with my master?" he asked.

Before Mr. Waldron could frame any reply, John Morley gave the first token of returning life by

heaving a profound sigh. Hester was upon her knees beside him again in a moment, pressing her small cold hands upon his burning forehead, and speaking to him in quiet tones. He lay still for a few minutes, but after awhile he pushed her on one side, and staggered to his feet. He confronted Mr. Waldron, and the two men looked speechlessly into one another's eyes, having no need of words.

The crushed and torn letter lay upon the table in the full light of the lamp. Neither of them looked at it, though both saw it, and both, in their fevered brains, were repeating the words written in it. Mr. Waldron at last tried to speak, but twice his voice failed him, until by a great effort he cried, while still gazing into John Morley's face, "He is my only son."

"Leave me," exclaimed John Morley, awakening to the full shame and grief that had befallen him, "let me be alone. Why do you all stand staring upon me? Leave me to myself, I say."

"No, brother, no," answered Mr. Waldron, his voice broken by sobs; "God is our only refuge till this calamity be overpast. Let us pray together, brother."

He knelt down, and Hester knelt also; but Lawson remained standing near the table, where the letter lay open before him. John Morley himself had fallen back into his chair, in a maze of anguish and dishonour. He could not pray yet. In the whole universe there was no one but himself and the wife who had proved unfaithful to him. If there was a faint thought of God lingering somewhere in the dark cells of memory, it was only of a Being who either saw all these crimes without having the power to prevent them, or who was so far removed in a serene and selfish blessedness that he could pay no attention to the sorrows of his creatures. He felt as yet no need of prayer.

But while he was thus lost in a stupor of despair, a prayer, mingled with sobs and tears, was being offered up for him by Mr. Waldron, who now for the first time realised how very near a brother John Morley was to him. When he had brought his broken supplication to a close, he rose from his knees, and clasped John Morley's hand affectionately and humbly. But "he spoke no word unto him, for he saw that his grief was very great."

A few minutes afterwards John Morley was left alone, and Hester was crying herself bitterly to sleep upon the pillow where Rose Morley's letter had lain hidden all day.

CHAPTER THE FOURTEENTH.

IN THE SHADOW.

IN the dead of the night the child's slumbers were suddenly broken by a light falling upon her closed eyelids. She awoke, and opened her eyes upon her father's face bending over her. He had placed his candle upon the chair at the side of the bed, and

the light shone full upon him. His eyes were blood-shot and strained, and his face wore a scared and haggard expression, as if he were gazing spell-bound upon some horrible vision. He was grasping in his hand, which was already cut and blood-stained, a sharpened razor, the hard bright steel of which was gleaming brightly. Never had Hester seen him thus visit her in her sleep before. She sat up on her pillow, and looked earnestly into her father's face, until he seemed troubled, and turned away uneasily from her childish scrutiny.

But he spoke after a little while, in hoarse and tremulous tones.

"Child," he said, "it is sometimes better to die than to live."

"Are you very angry, father?" asked Hester.

He did not answer her, but stood looking down upon her with his bloodshot eyes.

"I don't know what is the matter," she said, lifting up her hand and laying it on his neck, while he bent lower to receive the rare caress; "I don't understand what has happened; I am only a little gull, but I am your own daughter; tell me what is the matter, father."

"She is gone away," he answered, trembling and shivering; "Rose has left me."

"I know she is gone away," said Hester, drawing down his face to her lips and kissing it; "but she only went away this morning, and she is coming home again soon."

"No, never!" he cried, falling down on his knees, as if his failing limbs could no longer support him. "I shall never see her again; she will never sleep again under my roof."

As he spoke of it, the extremest tension of his anguish gave way a little. He continued kneeling at Hester's side, repeating dully in a half-whisper that Rose would never sleep again under his roof. The moment of temptation, in which it had seemed better to die than to live, was past, and with a man like John Morley could not return. He turned himself, with blind and dumb disgust, towards the life that stretched before him, which he must traverse, bowed beneath his burden of shame. He dreaded to open his eyes or utter a word, lest a full torrent of misery should break over him to overwhelm him at once. The image of Rose was before him, with all the fatal charms that had beguiled him into his second marriage; but behind it there rose a sweet, pensive, saint-like face, which had been fading from his memory, but now came back as if to reproach him. He felt that he ought to hate his second wife the more bitterly, because she had usurped and betrayed the place of Hester's mother.

"Hester," he said, "we must forget that this woman has ever lived with us"

As if he could forget! He laughed harshly after speaking the idle words. Would not the remembrance of her, and the shame which was th-

oughter she had brought him, be the food of his thoughts night and day? Would he not eat, and sleep, and read, with the remembrance of her infamy always before him? It was a horrible, unheard-of thing to happen to him. He had known that such sins were, but only as a thinker and philosopher. He had contemplated them afar off, as one of the many social problems which were altogether apart from himself, and which could never enter the sphere where he dwelt. It was a loathsome leprosy, to be looked at from a distance; but it had never entered his heart to conceive of the tainted hand touching his, or the foul lips breathing the atmosphere of his own home. He felt himself caught in the infected meshes. He abhorred himself, and his dwelling—that dwelling from which Hester's mother had passed peaceably away into her hallowed rest. This woman had dragged him down with her own fall, for he had made her "bone of his bone, and flesh of his flesh."

He put away, but gently and reverently, Hester's arm, which still lay upon his neck, and he turned aside his face from her kisses. He identified himself so fully with the woman who had dishonoured him, that it seemed to him sacrilege to suffer the innocent young lips of his little daughter to be pressed to his. The paroxysm of passion in which he had sought her room, resolved that neither of them should outlive the first night of his shame, was past for ever; but none the less was his heart crushed down and hardened.

A barrier seemed raised between him and his child. He had done her an irreparable wrong in putting into her mother's place a stranger, who had brought an ineffaceable stigma upon them both. For in the time to come, he could foresee it clearly, the world would not be too careful to remember that it was not her own mother who had fallen into the slough.

The sting of that thought pierced him yet more poignantly than any other. Hester's mother would be dragged down from her fair and holy place in the heavens, and be confounded with this lost, false creature, who had sunk so low into the abyss that even he, forced to gaze down into it, could not fathom all the degradation and vileness of it. Hester was looking at him with the clear, pure, sweet eyes of her mother, and he could not endure to meet them. He took up the light abruptly, and left her to weep and sob in the darkness.

For a whole week the house of John Morley was closed as if it had been the house of the dead. People who went by and saw the shutters all up, and the light excluded, made haste to repeat to one another every detail which the town's gossip could supply. The servant of the desolated household had a few choice particulars to add to the common stock. John Morley had shut himself up in his office and refused to see any one, even Hester herself. But at night, when he supposed everybody

else to be wrapped in sleep, he roamed to and fro restlessly in the house. It may be he sought then to discover if any trace was remaining of the residence of Rose in his home ; but, if so, he found none.

The only memorial of her presence there was the closed door of the room, the key of which she had carried off with her, and which he could only enter by a force and violence from which he recoiled.

CHAPTER THE FIFTEENTH.

SINNERS AND JUDGES.

WHEN John Morley returned, as time compels all to do, to his ordinary life, there were some marked changes in him. Not only his face bore the scars of a mortal conflict, but his daily conduct still more plainly testified to the hard grip of shame upon him. He withdrew peremptorily from every office in the church which brought him into prominence, and would occupy no position in it except that of the humblest member. He declined to give his counsel, as in former times, to the numerous clients who had found it less costly and less formidable to turn into John Morley's shop, than to seek the doctor or the lawyer. He ceased to care for his business, was apathetic and forgetful. The gravity which had characterised him was become an unbroken and joyless gloom, which took sorrow to its heart, and prostrated itself before despair.

On his part, Mr. Waldron also had suffered a severe shock ; but the sin of a son is not equal to the dishonour of a wife. Religious as he undoubtedly was, a righteous man who strove to judge righteously, the world's estimate of his son's conduct could not fail to influence him, and to appease in some measure his anger and sorrow. Robert might at any time repent, shake off his sin, and come back to social life, to be welcomed there without reference to his youthful indiscretion. He might enter upon a public career as useful and more brilliant than his father's, and not a voice would be lifted against him. Mr. Waldron mourned over his son, but there was no bottomless depth of anguish in his soul. He could gaze down into the gulf into which he had fallen, and see there a path, toilsome though it might be, by which he could climb up again into reputation and honour.

Miss Waldron looked upon her brother's sin as a cross expressly constructed for herself, and weighing more heavily upon her than upon any one else. She grew a hundredfold more terrific in her Bible classes and mothers' meetings, and expatiated with extreme unction upon the judgments of Heaven.

The religious poor generally enjoy being alarmed. They have been driven out of some of the strongholds of superstition, which are not without their charms, and they like to taste again the thrill and creep of awe, with which they were wont to glance back over their shoulders for the hobgoblins of former times. Miss Waldron invited them to peep

with terror into the mysteries of Divine judgment, and she became popular with them. A great work began in her classes, and she said that her brother's fall had been the conversion of many souls.

Miss Waldron took a profound interest in John Morley and Hester. She felt it almost as a personal insult that the dishonoured husband would not suffer her to probe his deep wound. It was a symptom over which she shook her head ominously.

But Hester was easily reached. She even carried her down to Aston Court one day, when she met her going out for a walk, that she might have a long uninterrupted opportunity with her, and make such an impression upon her tender mind as time would not be able to efface. She set Hester on a high, straight-backed chair, opposite to the harsh portrait of Luther, and addressed her in deep and awful tones.

"You have lost your step-mother—" she began.

"Oh !" interrupted the child eagerly, "tell me what has become of her, and what she has done. Nobody will speak about her to me, and they say I must never, never mention her name again."

"She has done," said Miss Waldron, in a tone of concentrated bitterness, "the greatest, vilest, foulest sin a woman can commit. She will never come back, and if she did, none of us ought to look at her, or speak to her. In old times she would have been stoned to death—yes, stoned to death, and you and your father would have been the first to cast a stone at her."

"No, no !" cried Hester, bursting into tears ; "I know now what you mean. She is like that poor woman who was very wicked, and they brought her to Jesus ; and he said, 'Let him that is without sin first cast a stone at her.' And not one of them could cast a stone at her. It would be the same now if she was here. And now, if you please, I should like to go home."

Hester did not linger for permission, but walked straight out through the glass doors, and along the terrace, and up the park, her heart swelling with childish grief and indignation. When she reached her father's house, she crossed over to the opposite pavement, and stood for a minute or two looking at it with tearful eyes. It had always been a dull, gloomy, low-spirited-looking house ; but now, with the large casement on the upper floor closed with shutters, it seemed more cheerless than before. The faded books in the shop windows, which had not been moved since Rose had fled, and the panes stained with the dust and the rain, were very mournful to look at ; and they affected Hester as if they had been living things, conscious of neglect.

Her feelings were not very definite, but there was a sort of yearning pity towards the deserted old place, which seemed abandoned by the sun and all cheering influences. She wished to herself that she could comfort and revive the poor, decayed dwell-

ing; yet it required an effort to cross over again, and enter it as her home. There was not a sound to be heard within. She peeped into her father's room, and saw him sitting there in grey and grim silence, with his arms crossed upon his breast, and his head drooping, awaiting in this attitude the entrance of any chance customer, which disturbed him but seldom, as his neighbours yet shrank from intruding needlessly upon his grief.

Hester closed the door gently, and stole up the creaking old staircase, and through the empty rooms to Lawson's attic. He was stooping over his press in the window; but the ardour with which he had formerly pursued his work was dead, and his withered face was wrinkled with anxiety. Hester mounted to her old seat which had been so long deserted, for whilst Rose had lived in the rooms below she had rarely ascended to Lawson's workshop, and never stayed there long. She wished Lawson to be the first to speak; but he was in a silent mood, and for some time his work went on without a word being spoken on either side.

"Lawson," asked Hester, after a long perseverance in silence, "what do *you* think about my mamma—my step-mother, you know?"

"Don't trouble your little head about her," answered Lawson; "you just think about your own mother. I'll show you her picture again."

"No," interrupted Hester, as he was about to reach down the portfolio, "I want you to tell me truly why people talk so about her. They point at me in the streets, and I heard a woman say, 'I hear that's her little girl, poor thing!' I wish to know what it is all for; and I mean you to tell me, Lawson," she added imperiously. "How am I to

know what I ought to do, if I don't know what she has done? She was just as kind, and as good, and as pretty, when she went away that morning, as she ever was. Tell me directly, Lawson."

She had descended from her seat on the step-ladder, and was standing before him, drawn up to her fullest height, with her head thrown back in an attitude of childish authority at once amusing and graceful. Lawson sat down on a high three-legged stool, which was his ordinary seat, and confronted her, his sallow skin flushed with a dull red, and his eyes not meeting hers, but fixed upon some point behind her, as if he saw, and was speaking to, some person who stood at the back.

"I'd tear my tongue out," he said, "before I'd tell the child. But if I knew where that woman was, I'd follow her to the world's end, and strike her down dead. As long as she's alive, she's the master's wife, and I know you cannot come back till she is dead. Only give me time, and I'll see her dead at my feet."

"Lawson, Lawson!" cried Hester in affright, "who are you speaking to? What are you speaking about?"

He lifted himself up slowly, and set doggedly to work again, turning a deaf ear to all Hester's questions and entreaties. Before him on the press was a volume bound in purple morocco, the title of which he was lettering in gold. One after another he took up mechanically his stamps of old English characters, and pressed them upon the gold leaf. He did it carefully, yet with an air of abstraction, and his thin lips moved as if he was muttering to himself. Hester had stolen away sobbing, and the attic was his solitary abode again.

END OF CHAPTER THE FIFTEENTH.

ON GETTING UP.



AMONG the many and varied complaints to which mankind is subject, and which contribute to sustain and provide for a large number of doctors' wives and children, there is not one, perhaps, which is treated so lightly and noticed so jocularly as sluggishness. If some persevering and talented person would compile statistics showing to what extent there exists among us the class who are deeply impressed with the necessity of early rising, but who lie in bed—who know the benefits of being awake and about at six in the morning, but who are habitually asleep at that hour—it would indeed be a matter, we think, for the astonishment of the community at large, to see what a power this inability to rise exercises over the minds of their reasoning fellow-creatures. And the individual undertaking such a task would have to find his way into all

classes of society, for the errand-boy who is "a lazy rascal," and the son and heir who is "naturally inert," suffer from one and the same complaint, the chief symptom of which is that they "can't get up."

There are, of course, people (to whom we shall afterwards allude) who are thoughtlessly lazy; who do not particularly see, and who certainly do not try to find out, any reason why they should rise by preference at six instead of ten, and who even if called at the latter hour would probably consider the service premature; but, on the other hand, there are those who know of better things, and who pass their lazy days in rigid resolutions "to get up early to-morrow morning." And there can be no doubt, in the mind of any one who has given attention to this matter, that the mortification and annoyance endured by this class of sluggards must be extreme. Listen to this piteous account of himself by a sufferer:—

"I put my watch upon a little nail at my bedside. My time of business is half-past nine, and I believe that if I rose at eight I should have *just nice* time to get there. I say, 'I believe if I rose at eight,' for I have not yet done so. I generally awake about half-past seven. Delighted to find I have yet another half-hour, I turn on my side and invariably fall asleep again immediately. I wake again at eight. Then I say to myself, 'It is time to get up.' I have scarcely made this observation when I perceive that it is five minutes past eight. While remarking how quickly the five minutes passed, it becomes ten minutes past, and I yawn finally and rub my eyes as people do just before they spring out of bed.

"When I take my hands away from my eyes, I keep the latter shut for a moment while I take, as it were, a farewell of my bed for the day.

"Twenty-five minutes past eight: I feel with a horrid sense of guilt that I have been to sleep again.

"Knowing now I *must* get up, I assume a sitting posture, and think for a moment over the miseries of my position. The last twenty-five minutes have been exceedingly uncomfortable, and I have been frightfully tormented by my sense of what is right. And then comes the bitterest part of my reflections. The act of rising is not one whit more pleasant, or less discomfiting, than it was half an hour ago. Deeply impressed with the significance of this fact, I crawl slowly out of bed, and for the next two hours the hurry and fluster I am in remind me painfully of the time I have wasted."

Is not this a case for pity?

Not the least interesting feature of the disease which such unhappy people suffer from, is their steady demand for alarms and other mechanical contrivances to perform the work of Nature, when she has fairly given up in disgust. And we must do them the justice to say that many sluggards have, in their praiseworthy and conscientious endeavours to conquer their failing, inflicted upon themselves considerable annoyance, and occasionally that of a very painful nature. The writer was acquainted with an Oxford man, whose punctuality in being exactly fourteen minutes late for chapel every morning was a marvel to his friends, and who therefore determined to rouse himself fully half an hour earlier every morning by means of an alarm.

This he accordingly bought, and having duly wound and set it, placed it upon the corner of his dressing-table, styling it his "friend," who was going to cure him of his weakness. But what a change of opinion the morning brought about! At the appointed hour the machine duly went off with a bang, "whir-r-r," after the manner of such instruments. Alas for its too prompt and zealous friendship! With a cry of indignant remonstrance, a heavy boot was hurled at it, and, cut short in its appeal, it fell to the ground in a state of complete

silence and annihilation—while its owner turned on his side and "slumbered again."

We knew another sufferer who, by an ingenious contrivance of a movable shelf above his bed-head and the alarm of a clock, caused two books to fall upon whatever part of his head or face happened to be uppermost at half-past six in the morning. This person, we must admit, rose early as a rule, but one could not help reflecting on the superior comfort of those who attain the same object without the risk of a book-corner in the eye on waking.

We have mentioned these last cases as appertaining to a class struggling against its failings. But, as we remarked before, there are persons, equally slaves to this vice, who are confessedly and hopelessly given over to its influence, and these endeavour to work the mine of its delights to the utmost. It must not be imagined that simply to lie in bed all day would be a supreme happiness for these individuals, for their tastes are more refined, and wishes and ideas more epicurean. Their highest object is generally the realisation of pleasures which exist only in anticipation.

A person of this class, called on Saturday at nine and due at business at ten, knows he must get up. But give him a Sunday morning, and he is so persuaded of the comfort an extra hour would have been the day before, that he tries to keep up an idea that Sunday is Saturday. But in vain. He endeavours to make himself believe that he is due at ten, in order that he may experience the pleasure of being in bed at that hour under such circumstances. But he knows that he is not due, he knows that he may lie in bed for the next twenty-four hours if he will; and the salt having lost its savour, he laments the impossibility of feeling as he did the day before. The writer's grandfather was an amusing instance of this class. For the greater period of his life he was a lieutenant in the army, and a great slave to lying in bed of a morning.

His servant called him regularly with the words, "Time for parade, sir!" and with an exclamation, and after grumbling and moaning, the officer was obliged to turn out and attend parade. After he had retired, and the parade no more demanded his presence, he gave instructions to his servant to call him still at the same time, and with the same words, in order that he might have the satisfaction of blessing the parade, and going to sleep afterwards!

Such the disease: where are we to look for the remedy? Perhaps in the grand, but gradual, regeneration of society to which optimists look forward—who shall say? The gloomy part of such a prospect is its present unlikelihood, for society has not as yet stigmatised the failing here treated of; and even when society has passed its condemnation on a fault, its aversion and intolerance towards those who commit it are still some distance off.

IN THE BLOOM-TIME.



WHILST SHE LISTENS WITH A SMILE."

THE red flush was on the orchards,
The white snow was on the may;
The blackbird trilled his love-notes
To his dear mate on the spray.

The bright tears of dewy April
Glittered 'neath the sunbeams' kiss;
And pulse and heart leapt lightly,
For to live and love was this.

The soft grey tint of gloaming
Fell upon the western sky ;
The faint breeze of coming even
Shook the springing blades of rye,

As two rustic figures loitered,
Leaning idly on the stile,
He a bashful lover, telling,
Whilst she listened with a smile.

From beneath her long dark lashes,
Casts she archly up a glance ,
And, with folded hands, demurely
At her shy swain looks askance

She may love him - let him ask her—
Pretty, wilful-eyed coquette !
Let him speak out like a hero,
For she will not help him yet

By a single word of answer ,
No ! the man's part is to woo ;
Let the tale be to the end told,
Let the maiden have her due !

Speak boldly, bashful lover ;
Though the maid may not reply,
There is damask on her soft cheek,
There is love-light in her eye.

Sang the nightingale more loudly,
Shone more bright the evening star,
And the scent of dew-steeped woodbine
That was wafted from afar

Seemed far sweeter, oh ! far sweeter
Than but one brief hour ago ,
For the Future dawned like Eden,
Flushed beneath life's rosy glow

ASTLEY H. BALDWIN.

"POOR JACK."

IN TWO PARTS—PART THE FIRST



IN the new work which has, as it were, taken England by storm, Mr Plimsoll commences by saying he has no idea of writing a book, but the result will show that he has produced a book of surpassing interest, though one which will create a most painful impression.

From the tables appended to the statements made in the book, it appears that the per-centage of disasters to ships is greatest on the east coast, the old unseaworthy colliers suffering sadly each year from the custom being to send into the coal trade those ships which are too old and used-up for any other trade.

We continue almost in Mr. Plimsoll's words. In 1874, 2,174 vessels were lost upon our coasts, and 2,174 were lost whilst under the command of persons who were not possessed of certificates of competency, which fact speaks volumes of itself. Of these, 607 were colliers laden, and 183 colliers in ballast. Ships of the collier class employed in the regular carrying trade suffered severely, making the immense total of 1,200, or nearly half the total of all ships wrecked. And the cause of this enormous amount of wrecked ships is the notoriously ill-found and unseaworthy manner in which these vessels are sent on their voyages, so that in every gale, even if only moderate, it is certain that numbers must be lost. Thus in six years the wrecked total was reached of 6,357 of our coasting vessels, and a hideous total of life in these, in too many instances, avoidable wrecks.

In 1871, leaving out 120 fishing smacks lost, there was the vast number of 1,807 carrying vessels lost on our coasts, and one-half of these were colliers. The numbers given in the table showing the parts of coast on which wrecks take place, are 793 for the east coast. The force of wind in time of wrecks shows that 856 happened at a time when the force was under 6—i.e., when merely a strong breeze, in which a ship could carry single reefs and top-gallant sails, 149 when wind was at 7 or 8—a fresh gale, in which any properly manned, found, and navigated ship ought to be able to keep at sea in safety, and 528 with the wind at 9 and upwards—i.e., from a strong gale to a hurricane; that is to say that 856 were lost when they could carry top-gallant sails, 149 when a ship should be able to hold on her course, and 528 with wind at and above a strong gale.

The questions may well be asked, But are not nearly all these ships and cargoes insured? and is it to be supposed that the insurance people would not see to it if they were thus plundered? and may we not safely rely upon their self-interest to rectify any wrong-doing in this respect?

The underwriters cannot move in this matter—first, because the loss to each individual underwriter is too small to make it worth his time and trouble.

The popular idea of ship insurance is, that it is just the same as house insurance, when, if the house is destroyed by fire, the company have to pay the amount insured, and they can protect themselves if the fire has been caused by any neglect; but the case is totally different. The owner of a

ship or freight who wishes to insure applies to an insurance broker, with whom terms are arranged provisionally; and he is informed on what rate of premium the underwriters are likely to take the risk.

If they agree as to what terms will be accepted by the owner or freighter, in the event of the broker succeeding in placing the risk on those terms, the broker writes out a peculiar slip of paper, and sends a clerk with it into Lloyd's Underwriters' Room, which is filled with tables, and at each table sit four gentlemen. The clerk goes from table to table, and submits his slip first to one, and then to another. Some decline it, others append their initials as accepting, and write also, or the clerk does, the amounts which they are willing to insure.

The broker insures nothing himself; his profit consists in deducting from the premium which he receives from the ship-owner or freighter, to hand over in their several proportions to the underwriters, a commission of fifteen per cent. on the several amounts, five per cent. of which he keeps.

In case of loss the broker applies to each gentleman who signed the policy, for the respective sums which they have each guaranteed, and the transaction is complete; or the transaction is completed by the ship arriving safely at her port of destination.

To quote a case, the whole sum insured is £5,500, and the risk is divided amongst forty-five subscribers or underwriters, not one of whom loses more than £150, while twenty-five lose £100 each in case the ship is lost.

Now when we remember that the maximum each person can lose in this case is only £150, and consider the expense and worry of an investigation and trial in case of fraudulent carelessness, we shall see that it is useless for any one to move alone; and nothing can be expected from combined action on their parts. There is no time to inquire into insurers' characters, as the risk must be accepted or declined on the instant.

But, besides the reason that the individual loss of an underwriter is too small, considering the trouble and expense, to make it worth his while to dispute the claim, he is not strong enough. As a matter of fact, almost all claims, no matter how founded in fraud, are thus paid, and it is the rarest thing (it does not occur once in 50,000 cases) for a claim to be disputed; therefore one can judge how wretchedly bad the case of a ship-owner must be, who, to remarks on a case, can only urge, that all was right, "The underwriters have not disputed, but have paid his claim."

To dispute such a claim would be to end, once and for all, his career as an underwriter; and this, too, even if the brokers through whom he may expect future business are fully satisfied that he did

right. The fact is, the underwriter has no pecuniary interest in the matter either way.

Cannot sailors refuse to sail, except in ships so sound, so efficiently equipped, and so properly loaded as to afford a fair chance of their making a safe voyage? Unfortunately, the answer is not given to a nice calculation of the danger he may incur in a weak or old ship, and as he does not see his bread at sea, thinks one ship as good as any other.

Cannot we then look to the ship-owner, in this sense of justice, to his self-interest, to put a stop to this deplorable state of things?

We shall be better able to answer this question, when we have considered that in the early part of this century every ship was the subject of the anxious care of her owner, who neglected no known means of providing for her safety; and when from age or decay she could no longer be sent to sea with safety, she was broken up. Now the necessary repairs are so systematically neglected that it can be truly said, in the words of the committee of the Life-boat Institution, "Such is the notoriously ill-found and unseaworthy manner in which vessels are sent on their voyages, that in every gale, even if only moderate, it becomes a certainty that numbers of them will be destroyed;" and they may well add, "It is overwhelming to contemplate the loss of life from these, in too many instances, avoidable wrecks."

Before insurance was adopted, every ship was, after every long voyage, most carefully overhauled. If she was found to need repairs, those repairs were properly executed, all rigging being renewed, so that nothing was neglected to insure her safety; and her return home was watched for with the utmost solicitude and anxiety, so much so that it has passed into a proverb in daily use, everything being promised "when my ship comes home."

Gradually, however, as insurance has become more general, this great care has relaxed; trade being so busy and good, the customary overhaul was put off till the next voyage, then again it might have been delayed; all this neglect being induced by the reflection that now the ship was insured, the owner's property was safe in any event. Or as trade was so bad and the profits so small that they could not always be spending money, and the ship looked very well, the ship was sent to sea in a bad state of repair, now that the insurance prevented any chance of loss to the owner.

When you consider how small an addition to the fair load of a ship will augment the profits of a trip, twenty-five to thirty per cent., you will easily see how great is the temptation, especially in settled weather, to add to the extra weight where freight run low. The margin for profits over expenses is so small that it takes nine-tenths of the cargo to pay the costs; thus ten per cent. added to weight of

large doubles the profit, and twenty per cent. trebles the earnings, but the ship's trim is still difficult to find fault with. What an advantage for the reckless, and even for those who, in spite of disapprobation, follow the practice in *self-defence*, and how wonderful it should only be confined to a section of the trade!

When this temptation was held in check by fear of losing the ship, it was almost harmless; but when the fear of loss was removed, who can wonder that the caution went too, and the system of overloading has grown upon the reckless section of ship-owners till it has caused a large portion of the losses at sea every year?

If freight comes to the loading wharf it *must* go on board; the weather is fine, and trip short. The captain remonstrates. The clerk says, "Oh, captain, you're getting timid as you get into years;" and eventually it goes, and safely too, for it is only a few of the overloaded ships that are lost. A captain once complained that a clerk had said to him, "Oh, captain, you're getting afraid!" "Afraid?" he said; "I wished he was out with me some nights that I am out—one night of it would turn his hair white with fear."

Acts of Parliament are passed to secure the safety of nearly all classes of workmen—in factories, etc.—except our fine sailors. If a manufacturer or merchant ashore fails, the claims for his workmen's wages must be paid in full; no such provision is made for the sailor, and in too many cases this is the cause of great hardship. In one case a ship had been eighteen months on her voyage, and on arriving ship and cargo were seized by mortgagees; and the seamen, entitled to some £50 each for wages, were sent adrift without anything.

A workman refusing to work can be proceeded against in a civil action for breach of contract. Yet the seaman refusing to sail, after signing articles, is sent handcuffed to prison for three months—though the ship is totally unfit to go to sea. The food also provided in some ships is of the worst description, but there is no appeal for the sailor.

On one occasion some men who refused to sail in a ship, in which their sleeping-bunks were so wet that they had to sleep in their oil-skin clothing, were landed at a port, handcuffed and chained together by the police, and committed to the county gaol for twelve weeks' hard labour.

You may buy an old ship of 250 tons at auction for £50, sold because she was too rotten to go any more voyages, being too far gone to caulk; and instead of breaking up this old ship, you may, to the dismay of her late owners, give her a coat of paint and send her to sea. You can re-christen the ship, and after having managed to insure her very heavily, load her till her main-deck

is within two feet of the water amidships, and send her to sea. And if the poor sailors object, and refuse to sail, they may be committed to prison for twelve weeks—or a policeman may be sent on board to overawe the mutineers, and induce them to do their duty. Then if the ship is lost with all hands, you will make a large sum of money, and no one will ask any questions. One policeman who had threatened a refractory crew said, when all were lost, that he and his companions "rued badly that we hadn't locked 'em up without talk, as then they wouldn't have been drowned."

Before insurance became general, there was no need of legislation; and now a new state of things has arisen, which the law has not yet provided for.

Another cause of disaster is the practice of sending a ship to sea with too small a number of men to manage her if bad weather comes on. They may manage her if the weather is fine, but far too many lives are lost from this cause.

Bad stowage is another cause of loss sometimes; that is to say, the cargo, perhaps a mixed one, is so stowed that the centre of gravity of both ship and cargo is too much or too little below the meta-centre, or centre of displacement, round which a vessel moves in rolling.

Defective construction next claims a few words. There is great reason to think that ships are occasionally lost from the imperfect manner of their construction.

One ship carefully surveyed in London was found to be put together with *devils*, or sham bolts—i.e., where they ought to be copper, the head and about an inch of the shaft are copper, the rest is iron; in other cases different sham bolts are used, merely a *bolt-head* being driven in, and only as many real bolts used as will keep the timbers in their places. Seventy-three *devils* were found in one ship by one of the surveyors of Lloyd's. One might think that iron would do as well as copper; but it is not so, as iron so soon perishes, turning into a substance like plumbago. This conversion is owing to chemical action.

When iron steamers were first built, they were constructed five and six times as long as broad. Some twelve years since, it was found that by making them much longer than usual, very little, if anything, was added to the cost of working the vessel, whilst the additional space being all available for cargo, instead of being occupied by engine, etc., double the quantity of cargo could be taken on board, and without doubling the length of the ship.

Now steamers are sometimes built ten, and ten and a half times their breadth, and in some cases sixteen times longer than their depth—that is, from the top of the main-deck beams to the keel.

Many steamships were lengthened in such a manner as to make their foundering at sea only a question of time.

Now as to cargo. Goods more than forty cubic feet of which weigh a ton are called measurement cargo; if they are so light that eighty or eighty-five cubic feet do not weigh a ton, they are still called and charged for as a ton; goods of which thirty-five feet weigh a ton are called dead-weight. Now five cubic feet of iron weigh a ton, so that this is the heaviest dead-weight carried; and, from the weight pressing on so small a space, is the most dangerous cargo a ship can bear. One ship, 872 tons register, was loaded with 1,591 tons.

In another case a vessel was eighteen feet six inches in depth, and according to Government and Lloyd's rule her spar deck should have been nine feet three and a quarter inches above the water-line, but was in reality only four feet two inches; and the main-deck, which should have been two feet three inches above the water-line, was actually two feet ten inches below.

It is needless to say this ship foundered off the English coast, but by God's mercy all the crew were saved.

There are several rules which find favour with ship-builders, the oldest of which is known as Lloyd's rule—viz., three inches of side (known as freeboard)

for every foot depth of hold; but in some cases it is said, when a ship has a broad beam, this will be safe.

Upon one occasion a gentleman said, "You should have been here yesterday; a vessel sailed so deeply loaded, we all expect to hear of her being lost. She was so loaded that the captain himself said to me, 'Isn't it shameful, to send men with families to sea in a vessel loaded like that? Poor fellow! it is very doubtful if he ever reaches port.'"

Five others made the same remark, one of them saying she did not seem to be more than twelve or fourteen inches out of the water. The poor captain called on a friend, and was very depressed in spirits. He said he had measured the ship, and her side was only twenty inches out of the water. He also asked his friend to look after his wife; and the wives of two of the sailors begged the owner "not to send the vessel to sea so deep."

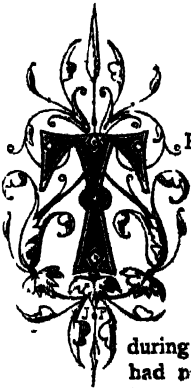
She sailed, and my friend said if it came on to blow the ship *could not* live. It did blow half a gale all the day after she had sailed, but not above force 7, which would not hurt a well-found and a loaded vessel.

She was lost, and nearly twenty men never again returned home.

END OF PART THE FIRST

A MYSTERY.

IN THREE CHAPTERS—CHAPTER THE THIRD.



THREE more days passed in this hopeless way, and I had discovered no new light. I had paid more than one visit to the house and to the warehouse, and one day at the latter place came upon Martin or Martini. He informed me that he was engaged as a packer there during the day, and reminded me that I had not yet witnessed his performance. I also saw Miss L——, and did *not* fall in love with her; but I resolved that if Ormerod remained obstinate, as I feared he would, I would not respect the confidence he had placed in me, but bring Miss L—— into the witness-box, to state what she knew of the matter.

At last, one evening, when I was thoroughly worn out with my anxiety, I thought of my promise to Martin, and determined to have what relaxation the place of amusement could afford me; and that was the happiest resolution to which I could have come, for it gave me the first inkling of the truth.

Martin's performance was on the tight-rope, and very clever it was, I have no doubt; but I confess

I am not interested in such things, and was not taking much notice of what was going on, when some hitch occurred; Martin's foot slipped while he was on the rope, whereupon he descended and re-chalked his feet. Those white marks upon the brick cornice flashed across me at once, and I felt that the sudden excitement of the thought made me flush and tremble. However, I soon calmed myself, and sat out the rest of the performance—without observing it, however, for my thoughts were otherwise occupied; I felt there was a great difference between walking on a tight-rope and on a narrow cornice against a wall, for in the latter case the centre of gravity must necessarily be disturbed; but I could not then arrive at any satisfactory solution of that difficulty, and had to wait until the next morning, and that morning set my doubts at rest.

I was at No. 10, Crawley Street, the first thing, and any doubt I might have had was cleared up; I saw that the white marks extended from the window of that house to the window of No. 9, and no further. Then I examined the wall more minutely; what I had supposed to be the holes left by the vine-nails I observed with a fresh interest;

they extended in an irregular line, about six feet above the cornice, and they also appeared only between the two windows. The inference was at once obvious—he who with chalked feet had crept along that cornice, had grappled the wall with some sharp hook or spike, and thus saved himself from falling.

I had forged the second link of my evidence, and it brought me at once to the man, but I still felt there was much to do before the case was completed. I remembered his statement that he had heard groans at half-past eleven, and I therefore assumed that was not the time the murder had been committed; I made no doubt that he had volunteered the statement to make himself doubly secure; that having planned the whole thing with consummate ability, and baffled the police as to the how, he had, to complete the mystery, also endeavoured to baffle them as to the when, and had succeeded; but I was not without hopes that this final piece of cunning might prove too cunning, and be the means of putting another proof in my hands, knowing as I did that when criminals volunteered explanations they were pretty sure to commit themselves.

It will be observed that I already looked upon Martin's guilt as certain, and so I did; but I had to convince other people of it, and caution was still necessary. I, therefore, rather avoided Martin for the next few days, and made my inquiries very secretly, confining them to two points: where was Martin at half-past eleven on the night in question? where was the broken chisel?

Having observed Martin leave the warehouse one day with a wagon-load of bales, and knowing, therefore, he was likely to be some time absent, I took the opportunity this afforded me of calling and asking for him. They of course said he was not in, and, moreover, added that he would not be back for an hour. So I waited awhile, chatting with the men, endeavouring to learn all I could of Martin's habits, and keeping my eyes about me, for which I was duly rewarded, for I presently spied an empty packing-case with the lid leaning against it.

"Who opened that case?" I asked.

"Goodness knows," replied one of the men, "we don't keep no account of that sort of thing. What makes you so curious about it?"

"Only this, that whoever opened it works with very bad tools. See there."

The man looked, and said, "Ay, now I know. That's old Martin's mark, that is. He broke his chisel some time back, I remember."

"Where is it?" I asked; "I know something about steel, and should like to see a chisel that could break in that way."

"I don't know where it is," said the man; "besides, he had it ground down square the next day."

"Well," said I carelessly, "it is of no consequence; but that reminds me that I want some

grinding done. Could you recommend me to a good man?"

They directed me to the man who did such work for them, and I left, saying I would call again for Martin in about an hour, and went in search of the cutler. He was easily found by the directions I had received, and I told him I wanted him to do some work, I forget now what; that I had seen a chisel he had ground down for Martin, and liked the style in which it was done. Could he tell me how much he charged for that? He referred to his books and told me. And how long did he take over that job? He told me this also—four days, I think. "I believe it was left with you," I said, "on the 28th October, was it not?" "Yes," said he, "I have got the date entered." The murder was committed on the night of the 26th.

Then I bought a bit of wax, and waited until the dinner-hour at the warehouse had arrived, when I called again for Martin, and of course he was again out. So I strolled into the room where I had seen the case, saying I would wait for him, and, being alone, took a careful impression upon the wax of the chisel-marks, with which I went away, and did not wait for him.

This was a good morning's work; but still more remained to be done: I had to find out where Martin was at half-past eleven on that night.

I knew the hall was not closed until nearly twelve o'clock, but Martin's performance was over much earlier, and therefore that told me nothing. After turning the matter over in my mind, I thought that the best thing I could do would be to watch Martin's movements for one night. I knew he generally left the hall about eleven, and stayed in the inn parlour, where I had first seen him, for twenty minutes or half an hour, and then, it was presumed, went home; but I ascertained that on the night of the murder he was not at the inn, and ascertained it in this wise:—

I was sitting among the usual set that evening, waiting for my man, who had not arrived although it was beyond his time, when I made some remark to that effect.

"No," replied one of the frequent visitors, "Martin don't look in o' Monday nights; he has something else to do."

"Does he go courting?" I asked.

"Not he! He goes over to Marlock to give his mother her bit o' money. He gets away from the 'all early on purpose, and walks over. He's very good to his mother, he is."

Upon receiving this information, I saw I must give up my idea of watching him, and wait until the morning for the completion of my case. I was annoyed at this, for I feared the tell-tale packing-case might be removed, or that Martin might hear of my inquiries and take the alarm. However, there was no help for it, so that evening

I wrote out a rough statement of all I had learned, which I intended to complete and lay before the detective as soon as I had got this additional evidence, and then went to bed.

On inquiring the next morning, I found that Martin left the hall on a Monday night at half-past nine, and that the distance to Marlock was a little over three miles, and this would allow for his return by the hour he had named. Any one going to Marlock this way would have to cross the river by a ferry, but there was another road by the bridge which nearly doubled the distance. I determined to go by the ferry.

I am not usually given to talking with strangers, I suppose I ought to call myself a shy man in that respect, but during my stay at Pitborough I had to make it my business to do so, and I had now to introduce myself to another stranger, namely, the ferryman. He was very loquacious, and it would be tedious to set down all he said during that leisurely pull across the river, so I will merely give the substance of what was to my purpose. He began grumbling at his hard life, and the small pay his labour obtained, "and as if that wasn't enough," he said, "a beastly old barge cum and stove me in the other day, and I lost better nor two days' work by it. The parson, he says it was all through a-working on Sunday, but I don't think myself that had anything to do with it—or p'raps the barge oughtn't to ha' been working on Sunday, however."

"What Sunday was that?" I asked.

"The Sunday afore last that ever was. However, as I was saying, on Monday o' course no one would work, they never does except me, and so it was Tuesday night afore I got my boat right again, and lost two good days' work."

"And how did people get across in the meantime?"

"They just had to go round by the bridge, on Shanks's mare, and I hope they liked it. I know I laid in bed all day."

I paid that man liberally, and astonished him somewhat, and then I walked on to Marlock. I found this a little straggling village, and there being only one public-house in it, I made sure Martin would look in on his visits, and in all probability take a glass before starting homewards, so I went boldly in and said, "Is there a man named Martin here?"

"No, but he was here last night."

"Dear, dear, what a pity! Is he often here?"

"He comes in every Monday night."

"Not every Monday night, I think. I understood the Monday before last he was elsewhere." (I am afraid I told a good many untruths during this mission of mine.)

"Oh, yes, he was; that was the night there was no ferry."

"Yes."

"And he stayed later than usual, because he didn't need to catch the boat; it was past eleven before he left, for I remember we had a'most to turn him out to lock up, he seemed so reluctant like to go."

There was my case complete.

I hurried back to Pitborough, added this last piece of information to my statement, and armed therewith, and the wax model of the chisel-mark, sought an interview with the detective who had the management of the case. He was inclined to be suspicious and reserved when I first stated my motive in waiting upon him, but I could see, as I proceeded to bring forward proof after proof, that his interest was awakened, and that he entered into the matter with great zest.

"And now," said I in conclusion, "if you act at once on this information you will secure the packing-case from which I took this impression. You will also find, I think, that this man's book which he uses for grappling the bales fits the holes in the wall, and that the money stolen from No. 9 will be found in the upper room of No. 9, *Crawley Street*."

"I believe you've got the man," said he, "but why did you not communicate with us?"

"Because you had got your man," said I, "and that was enough for you."

"Well, it is a beautiful case," he said, and then added, as though he suddenly remembered it had been got up unofficially, "but there was a good deal of chance in it, you know."

On after consideration I was somewhat inclined to his opinion; I think there *was* a good deal of chance in it, but that did not justify Ormerod's ingratitude.

The man Martin was tried and convicted, and in the end confessed his crime, so that Ormerod was completely cleared of the charge, and he expressed himself much obliged to me, and declared there was nothing he would not do to serve me in return; and it was then I related to him the whole course of my proceedings, and even informed him of the resolution I had come to of bringing Miss L—— forward, had it been necessary.

On looking into his uncle's affairs, he found the property of such value, and all devised to himself that he plucked up heart, and made formal proposals for her hand, which were accepted. I think, after marriage, he told her of what I had intended to do. I know that she ruled him with a rod of iron, and was not likely to let him keep any secret to himself; I also know that she behaved very coldly, not to say rudely, to me on several occasions; and that he, poor Ormerod, soon after cut me in the street in the most heartless manner.

That, with a ten-pound note which I am bound to say he presented to me on his release from prison, as an earnest of future favours, was all I gained by this my first and last detective experience.

HESTER MORLEY'S PROMISE.

BY HESBA STRETTON,

AUTHOR OF "THE DOCTOR'S DILEMMA," ETC. ETC.

CHAPTER THE SIXTEENTH.

A SUNLESS SPRING-TIME.

THE brief season of Hester's childhood was ended. By small degrees household cares thrust themselves upon her; and, at times when the daughters of other homes were still careless and irresponsible, she had begun to busy herself quietly about her father, watching for his wants and providing beforehand for them. The old servant gradually lost her importance, and finding herself no longer regnant, she abdicated indignantly; and Hester, a woman already, at the age of fourteen, supplied her place without troubling her father with the matter, while he seemed unconscious of the change.

As for her education, that was self-directed and almost self-acquired. She had gone to no school; for if ever the thought of it had been pressed upon John Morley, he had thrust it away with impatient agony. For the only good school in the place was the one in which Rose had been governess, and he would have felt less emotion in seeing his child dead in her coffin, than in knowing day after day that she was gone to that school. He allowed her to choose and engage her own masters; and they came and went, and she received them and their instructions with a quaint, shrewd, old-fashioned womanliness, which often threw them into doubt as to whether she was indeed the young girl she seemed. It was an isolated life, and Hester grew so used to the shadowy, colourless tone of the old house, that she felt afraid of venturing out into the brilliant light and ceaseless stir of the outer world.

In this heavy and stagnant atmosphere Hester's young nature was compelled to unfold all the graces of girlhood which could struggle into existence. The blossoms were but pale and few, but they were very sweet, had there been any one to take pleasure in them: a quaint, quiet, demure, and pensive girl; her heart feeding upon fancies half romantic and half religious. One thought and memory lived within her—the memory of the fair young step-mother, and the thought of her mysterious crime.

There was a memorial of Rose's brief sojourn under their roof, which was more directly beneath Hester's notice than her father's, for the closed room, the key of which the unhappy wife had carried away, was opposite to her bed-room, in a part of the house which her father never entered. For, since the night after his wife's elopement, John Morley's foot had never ascended the two or three steps leading to Hester's chamber, and the locked door

behind which were hidden all the mementoes of Rose.

This room was like a grave in the house. Never did a sound come from it, though Hester, while yet a child, had sometimes sat up in bed at nights, holding her hand against her throbbing heart, and listening, as if some one might be moving about that mysterious room. No light could penetrate into it, and the shuttered windows looked blankly out upon the sky. She was not afraid of the place, but she was awed by it. The prevailing gloom and stillness of the whole house seemed to centre there in a perpetual silence and blackness, which was the monument of Rose Morley's guilt. So long as that heart of darkness remained, the sun could not shine very brightly into any other nook of the dwelling. It was the eye of the house, and that eye being darkness, how great was the darkness!

The years glided by, strengthening the fixed customs of the household. John Morley became formal and automatic in his habits. At a given moment of the morning his clouded and sad face and bowed figure emerged from his chamber, looking neither to the right hand nor to the left, and glided shadow-like into his sitting-room, where his solitary breakfast awaited him. From that time till seven in the evening he remained brooding over his lot, with no distraction except the entrance of his few customers. His business declined slowly but surely, and yet he scarcely perceived it.

In the almost sublime egotism of his grief, he was conscious only that time did not dissipate the clouds about him, but rather drew their sombre curtains more closely and thickly. At length, in the course of years, the sole custom left to him was that of the people of his church, most of whom were poor and little given to reading. It seemed also as if the fire of Lawson's genius was for ever quenched. The aristocracy of the county trusted no more rare and costly volumes to John Morley's binding office.

Now and then Lawson achieved a triumph, but success came only to him as a chance. Yet, in a little measure, his cunning returned when Hester brought her sewing up-stairs into the sunny attic, and sat in the obscure window by his press, plying her needle busily, though with few words passing between them. Sometimes she set her own hands to the work, under his directions, and gained a rare skill in it. But, for himself, his trembling fingers could not regain their delicate workmanship, and

he felt that his occupation was gone from him. However, the current of life had drifted him into quiet waters, which, if they were not sunny, seemed very safe ; and the sweet young face of Hester, not quite round enough or rosy enough for her years, was a hundredfold dearer to him than it could ever have

Miss Waldron never forgot, and never suffered Hester Morley to forget, that their spheres in life were totally different. She gave Hester gooseberries to eat, while she regaled herself with grapes. It was something after the same fashion that she fed the souls of her scholars. There were promises and ex-



"CONTEMPLATING HER OWN FACE."

been in the brightness and gaiety of a happier girlhood.

The chief changes in Hester's own existence were regulated by the sessions and vacations of Parliament. Whenever Mr. Waldron rested from his Parliamentary duties in the seclusion of the country, Hester's religious duties became a little severe, for Miss Waldron expected her to attend punctually all the meetings for females, as well as occasionally to visit Aston Court for more private and personal instruction.

periences too luscious for inferior palates ; grapes of Eshcol, belonging by right to the aristocracy of the church, among whom she was numbered by every claim which it is possible to possess. By birth, by rank, by wealth, by early membership, by unremitting attendance at public worship, by indefatigable labours, and by every other qualification which the most exacting church could require, Miss Waldron laid claim to the finest of the grapes ; and they were adjudged to her without a single dissentient voice.

CHAPTER THE SEVENTEENTH.

A POINT OF CONSCIENCE.

HESTER's eighteenth birthday was come. It was noticed by no one but herself, and she kept it by buying a new bonnet in the place of an old one which had seen long and hard service, and by contemplating her own face a little longer than usual, as it smiled and blushed back at her from the small round mirror which hung over her dressing-table. It was a spark of vanity quickly put out by the reproaches of her morbid conscience, and she went down-stairs to fulfil the duties of the day more in the spirit of eighty than of eighteen.

This same day Mr. Waldron found himself hovering about John Morley's shop, passing and repassing it in a singularly embarrassed and irresolute state of mind. There had not been much intercourse between them since the wrong committed by his son. John Morley had shrunk from all contact, and he had respected his feelings, though he could not sympathise with them. Sympathy was not Mr. Waldron's forte. He argued that if he had been able to support the thought of his son's sin, and, while deeply mourning it, still not to suffer it to interfere with his faithful discharge of public duties, both in the church and world, John Morley ought also to have proved himself superior to his sorrow and disgrace.

He had been a perpetual and jarring memorial of the past, with his grey face and white head; and Mr. Waldron had been naturally irritated by him, whenever he was residing near Little Aston. To-day he felt it an awkward thing, though he was a great man and a member of Parliament, to enter John Morley's shop, and give utterance to the words he had carefully meditated beforehand.

At last he marched forwards, ringing the shop bell furiously with his quick entrance; and John Morley, gaunt and melancholy, the wreck of the handsome man he had once been, met him and looked him in the face with sunken eyes, which glowed with a dull and sorrowful flame.

"I wish to speak to you alone, brother Morley," said Mr. Waldron, offering his hand, which probably John Morley did not see, for he did not take it.

"We are alone here," he answered.

"No, no," replied Mr. Waldron, "we are liable to interruption here, and I have much to say to you."

"Father," said the voice of Hester from the room within, "come in here."

John Morley complied by a silent gesture to his guest to enter, and he, removing his hat for the first time, passed in, and saluted Hester with the air of old-fashioned gallantry he had been wont to display towards her pretty step-mother nine years before.

She had been sitting in her great chair, which stood summer and winter in the same spot on

the hearth; and as soon as her quiet reception of the visitor was over, she resumed her seat, and took up her work again. Mr. Waldron stood opposite to John Morley, neither Hester nor her father asking him to be seated. The elder man, with whom life had been a prosperous thing, looked ten years younger than he upon whom had fallen perhaps the heaviest burden that can crush the spirit of a man.

"Brother," said Mr. Waldron, in a voice which faltered more than it had done when he had addressed his maiden speech to an inattentive audience in the House of Commons, "I am come here to ask a great gift. If the choice had been given me, there is nothing I would not have done to spare you and myself the pain we must bear to-day. But my duty lay here and with you. Will you let me speak to you?"

John Morley bowed his head as his only reply.

"My son," stammered Mr. Waldron—and John Morley shivered and shrank back, as if recoiling from a hand raised to strike him—"My son, Robert, whom I have banished from my house these nine years, is longing to return. He is ill and penitent—penitent almost to despair. He implores to be no longer an outcast from his own home, and the place which will be his at my death. He is my only boy, and I am getting well into years, and my heart yearns towards him. When Absalom fled to Geshur after the murder of his brother Amnon, he was an exile but three years when his father's soul longed to go forth to him. Do you hear me, brother Morley?"

"I hear you," he murmured in a hollow and almost inaudible tone.

"Oh, let me bid him come home!" said Mr. Waldron, urgently; "his sin was great, but it was the sin of a young man. It has been punished enough. For your sake, and for righteousness' sake, I have never received him under my roof since then—my only son! It would be unnatural, unmerciful, unjust, if I refused to let him come home, now that he is broken in health and contrite in spirit. My house is empty and desolate without him, and he is my heir. He will take my place when I am gone."

There was no answer when Mr. Waldron ceased to speak. John Morley stood with bowed shoulders and bent head, while his frame trembled like that of a child who knows not how to escape from the presence of some cruel tyrant. Hester's work had fallen from her hands; and the faint colour in her cheeks, which was never deeper than the delicate tint of a wild rose, faded altogether away.

"Do you hear me?" asked Mr. Waldron, when the silence grew insupportable.

"I hear you," muttered John Morley again.

"Then why do you not answer me?" he cried impatiently. "I am not dependent upon your per-

mission. I need not have spoken to you at all about my son's return. But tell me that you will give your consent to his coming back to me, after all these years."

"And she?" whispered the husband, with bloodless lips, and a face as of one upon the point of death from some slow torture.

"Good heavens!" exclaimed Mr. Waldron, "he knows nothing about her. They parted—did you not know it?—only a few months after she fled. He has been alone; he is alone now—ill, repentant, suffering in mind and body. You have been well avenged, John Morley."

"But the woman?" he breathed, with scarcely a motion of his wan lips.

"I know nothing of her," was the short answer: "I am not talking of her, but of my son——"

He paused suddenly, for Hester had left her seat and placed herself at her father's side, with her hand resting fondly and protectingly on his arm.

"You are talking of your son," she said in hurried tones, "and of your own desolation; but you do not think what it has been here, in this home, to me—to my father. You have no right to speak of desolation to us; you, who have had your duties and your pleasures as before. Look at my father if you wish to see what your son has done. Look at me. We have had no laughter, or smiles, or joyful words, not one, these nine years. If he is to come home again, why may not she? Has she not repented, do you think? Would it be impossible to bring back our banished one as well as yours?"

"It would be impossible," answered Mr. Waldron, in a low voice.

"Would it be impossible, father?" she continued. "If she came back, as his son comes back, penitent and suffering and broken-hearted, could we not take her in, the poor contrite creature? I think of her often," and Hester's voice almost failed her. "Is it impossible?"

"She can never come back," answered John Morley.

"Oh! it is not right," cried Hester, in her young energy of passion; "why should you receive your son back, if we cannot forgive her? If he comes back forgiven, why should not we open our door to her?"

"You are but a child yet, Hester," replied Mr. Waldron.

"Yes," she said, "but there are some things hidden from the wise and prudent, which are revealed to babes. I would not receive one and cast out the other. If she should ever come back, broken-hearted and penitent, be sure I will not turn away from her."

She spoke with a kind of gracious hardihood, at which Mr. Waldron would have smiled any other time, but he was too deeply in earnest just now to be moved by anything apart from his purpose. He

had made it a point with his conscience to obtain John Morley's permission for the return of his son, and as yet he had said nothing which could be construed into consent.

"Hester," he said, for John Morley looked like one half stupefied, "my son is truly repentant, and he implores your father to forgive him, and to suffer him to return home. He knows nothing, and has known nothing for years, of that unhappy woman. If we could discover her, we would do everything in our power to repair the past, as far as it ever can be repaired. Tell me, Hester, is your father merciful and Christian in prolonging the exile of my boy?"

His voice and attitude were full of entreaty, which had relinquished all the harshness of a claim. He listened for Hester's answer as for a sentence which would be the doom of his son. John Morley himself raised his lustreless eyes, and fastened them upon his daughter.

"My father will not banish him from his home," she said, with a singular and solemn sweetness in her tone; "what are we that any of us should refuse mercy to another? Are we not bound to forgive, who have been forgiven of God?"

"No, no!" cried her father, "you do not know what the wrong is, Hester. I cannot do it. He has cursed all my life. They have almost, if not quite—I do not know yet whether they have not quite—destroyed my soul. These nine years I have caught no passing glimpse of God's mercy. I have been the song of the drunkard; I have been exceedingly filled with contempt. Do not let me see him, Hester; I could not look into his face and both of us live after it."

Like Mr. Waldron he was appealing to Hester, as if upon her depended the sentence which would be final. She stood silent for a minute looking tenderly into his face, with tears in her clear grey eyes; and when she spoke there was a scarcely perceptible tremor in her voice, though her answer was steady and definite.

"He must come home," she said; "he would come, sooner or later, if you withheld your consent. But he must not run the risk of meeting you. He must promise never to enter our chapel, or pass up and down this street, and then you will never see him. Let him come home if he will, but he must not intermeddle with us. You would consent to that, father?"

"Yes," he answered reluctantly.

"And you, Mr. Waldron?" she continued. "Do you understand our condition, and will you agree to it? If he will but keep away out of our sight, he will not greatly stir our old grief. You agree to it?"

"Yes, yes!" he replied eagerly, "he shall never come across your father, Hester. God bless you, child! But shall we never see you? Will you not come down sometimes to see us, as you used to do? Could you not forgive my son well enough

to speak to him, and tell him that you have forgiven him? You remember him, Hester?"

"I remember him well," she said, sighing; "I have not much to remember. Yes, I forgive him, and I forgive her also. Only I do not wish to see him again; but if I knew where she was, I would seek her out, and let her know that I had not deserted her."

"You will feel differently when you are a woman," said Mr. Waldron.

Hester shook her head, with a faint smile in her eyes, and went back to her chair and her sewing. There followed a silence which told Mr. Waldron plainly enough it was time to go. He looked round the room, dark, shabby, and bare, with the wear of nine years upon it since he had last stood within its walls. He glanced at John Morley, upon whom a premature old age had fallen more decrepit than that of years. Hester herself, pale, subdued, and womanly, bore a burden of years which had pressed hardly upon her in the passing. He saw the work of his son for whom he had been pleading, and his heart felt heavy in spite of his success. His own home might lose the light cloud which had overshadowed it, but what could ever chase away the thick gloom which had fallen upon this hearth? He had attained his purpose; but he went away saddened, and occupying his shrewd head with schemes for the welfare of John Morley and Hester, which had little chance of fulfilment.

CHAPTER THE EIGHTEENTH.

THE PRODIGAL'S RETURN.

ROBERT WALDRON'S long banishment of nine years had not been without alleviation or enjoyment. He had satiated his restless love of travel, which had been the fever of his youth; and now, at the age of thirty-three, he felt quite willing to settle down into the luxurious order of an English home, and to enter upon the pleasant occupations of an English gentleman. His father had by no means misrepresented wilfully his condition as one of remorse and contrition; he was convinced that his son was repenting in sackcloth and ashes for that long-past sin, which was kept so vividly in mind by himself and John Morley.

Nor had he been altogether deceived. There were seasons when Robert Waldron's volatile nature was plunged into profound depths of self-reproach, very closely allied to repentance. At these times, having no reticence, he appealed to his father for sympathy, and made him the confidant of all the prickings of his conscience. But it was many years since he had seen Rose; and but for the mystery of her utter disappearance, which kept alive a sort of interest in her fate, he would long ago have ceased to think of her. He wished to be at peace with both the world and himself, and therefore the

recollection of his former folly stung him at times into a kind of paroxysm of regret and compunction.

The difficulty of obtaining permission to visit Aston Court served to aggravate his home-sickness. He very well understood the point his father made of asking John Morley's consent; and in this he had more consideration for the injured husband than had Miss Waldron, who felt her dignity infringed by the idea that her family should stand upon such terms with that of a tradesman. Readily enough Robert acquiesced in the conditions laid down by Hester. He promised to avoid any contact with John Morley, and never to go to the chapel where he worshipped, nor into the street where he dwelt.

Having bound himself by these promises, he turned his face homewards with all the gladness which his emotional temperament experienced in at last gaining a long-delayed pleasure.

It was with a very keen feeling of delight that he caught the first glimpse of the formal front of his father's house, with its dark background of trees. Mr. Waldron, a sturdy, hale old man, not much aged since he had seen him last, was walking up and down the terrace in expectation of his arrival; and Robert called impetuously upon the coachman to stop, and sprang from the carriage to receive his welcome.

The father and son held one another by the hand in the strong, stern grasp which is the acme of British emotion, and gazed without speaking into each other's face. Mr. Waldron could not suppress a thrill of pride in this fine, handsome man, no longer a youth, whom he could call his son; and for a few minutes his satisfaction was both profound and untroubled. Yet as second thoughts came he felt a little disconcerted, for he had been picturing to himself a feeble, broken-spirited, shame-faced prodigal, coming back with the mournful confession in his mouth, "Father, I have sinned against heaven, and before thee."

True, there was a moisture in Robert's fine eyes, and his moustache rose and fell with the tremulous motion of his lips; but there was the rude glow of health and the sun-burnt hue of travel on his face. Beyond this and below it there was an indefinable air of general self-complacency, not in offensive obtrusiveness—it was no more than the gentlemanly self-approbation of one who for the time being has no special reason for diffidence—yet it was certainly very far removed from the mien of the prodigal who needs the best robe brought forth, and shoes put upon his feet, and a ring on his hand. All these Robert had supplied for himself.

He embraced his sister with the same affectionate agitation which he had shown in meeting his father, and he expressed with warm, quick feeling his delight in being at home. There had not been so lively a dinner-hour at Aston Court since

he had left it. Miss Waldron herself became almost gay, and laughed short little spurts of laughter, like the first efforts of a fountain to play after its pipes have long been closed up.

Mr. Waldron found his taste and enjoyment of humour and repartee returning, and forgot that his son was a sinner, until Miss Waldron left them alone in the dining-room. They drew up their chairs before a comfortable fire, and then there came one of those pauses full of satisfaction, when the heart is gathering to itself all the pleasures, rare and fleeting, of the first moments of reunion.

Robert's face was shining with unclouded happiness, when his father broke the pleasant silence.

"Robert," he said sharply; and the son looked up to see his smile vanished, and his face overcast.

"Yes, father," he answered in some amazement.

"Robert," repeated Mr. Waldron, "I was not prepared to see you so light-hearted. This is not what your letters led me to expect. I have a hard question or two to ask you, my boy, and it is as well to ask them first as last."

The air of gay and tender sentiment fled from Robert's face, which he now turned partially aside from his father's keen scrutiny.

"First of all," he said, "you must tell me truly, Robert, what has become of that poor girl."

"Father, I don't know," answered Robert in a tone of irritation; "I can only repeat what I have said already. She left me at Falaise, five months after we went away, and I have never heard a word from her or of her since. I have done everything a man could do for my own peace of mind, but I could never find the slightest trace of her. It was not that I wanted to see her again—we had been too miserable together for that—but I wished to make a provision for her. I would have given a great deal, either of time or money, to make sure that she was not in want."

"Robert," remarked Mr. Waldron, after a pause, "I thought you were a repentant man."

"So I am!" cried Robert hotly; "there are times when I could cut off my right hand, if that would undo what I did. But I cannot feel like that always; it would have been unnatural to feel like that to-day, when I see you and my sister again. Perhaps to-morrow I shall have one of my fits, and then you will see if I am not repentant. Why will you not let me enjoy myself while I can?"

"But I do not understand fits," responded Mr. Waldron, who had pursued an even tenor of unemotional life, both public, social, and religious; "a man is a penitent until he obtains pardon. Then he becomes a religious man, and a member of the Church, and steadily fulfils his duty towards God and man. There is no need of fits. Are you seeking pardon?"

"Not just at this moment," he answered; but his light tone changed to one of respect, as he

caught sight of Mr. Waldron's anxious face. "Dear father," he added, "I never was anything but a graceless fellow, not worthy of your anxiety. But if you mean, have I ever prayed to God to forgive my sin towards Rose, and to save her from further evil—why, there have been whole days when that prayer alone has gone up from my heart to him."

His voice faltered, and his changeful eyes were filled for a moment with tears.

"I wish to Heaven," he cried, as he recovered from the transient sadness, "I could do some tremendous penance, and have done with it. But what will satisfy you—you and God? I have been away nine of the best years of my life, and I have done all I could to atone for my fault; and I am ready to do everything you can suggest. Why cannot we let by-gones be by-gones?"

Mr. Waldron sighed heavily. This was not the repentance he had looked for, the repentance which was seemly in his son, the repentance of which he had spoken almost vauntingly to his minister. There was a doubt in his mind that Miss Waldron would be no better satisfied with its quality than himself; and Miss Waldron was something like a domestic pope—infallible and autocratic. Robert was settling down again into a quiet and self-sympathising mood, which could look, through the mist of years, at the other actors in the sad drama of the past.

"Poor Morley!" he said; "what has become of him?"

"He is a ruined man," said his father sternly; "you should see him to know what you have done. He is ruined in all senses, for I hear that he has no business, and is verging towards bankruptcy."

"We can help him there," exclaimed Robert with impetuosity; "we must save him from that!"

"John Morley," said Mr. Waldron drily, "unless I mistake him greatly, will take no help from our hands. We are not in a position to do him any favour."

It was a point of delicacy which the elder man could comprehend, while the younger could not. There was a vigorous hardness and manhood in Mr. Waldron's nature, which would have rejected indignantly the aid of a dishonoured hand; while his son would have seized the meanest help which would deliver him out of present difficulties.

"There was a little girl," said Robert in a tone of musing.

"Hester," answered Mr. Waldron, "the sweetest girl I have ever seen. She has the face of a saint—an angel, I was going to say. I often watch her as we stand up to sing, and I have sometimes thought how greatly I should have rejoiced had God blessed me with such a daughter. Not but that Miss Waldron is everything a father could wish; I have never found any fault in her. But

Hester—she used to come here occasionally—is so sweet, and tender, and gentle! Ah! John Morley is not altogether lost while he possesses a child like Hester.”

“Little Hetty?” said Robert, absently; “I remember her now. And she comes here sometimes?”

“Not while you are here,” replied his father; “I shall see her only from my pew, and Miss Waldron will meet her at her classes; that must suffice.”

The old man sighed as if over a lost pleasure; but he smiled once more as he looked at the face of his only son. The hard questions he had intended to ask, if there were any more, had slipped out of his mind, and Robert was not one to remind him of them. The evening took again its first brightness, and the welcome of the prodigal was not further clouded by ill-timed retrospections.

For a few days Little Aston was busy with the return of Robert Waldron. The old story was raked up and sifted with keen comments and discussions. Already the details of the ancient scandal were almost lost in obscurity; and some persons were not sure that it was merely the step-mother of Hester Morley who had left her husband's house, and never been heard of since. But Robert Waldron, handsome, young, and rich, could not remain under censure. His father had never been a favourite, for he had come among them as a stranger and dissenter, and had held himself aloof from a town in which he had no manner of interest. But the young squire, as Robert was called, had been a boy in their streets, had frequented their shops, and had made boyish acquaintance with many of them. It was natural to him to make himself popular. Besides this, now he was come back after his long absence, he attended the parish church, instead of going to the chapel, to which Miss Waldron's carriage drove every Sunday in irritating pomp. The vicar, with his three elegant and marriageable daughters, welcomed him cordially. The small gentry of the neighbourhood paid him homage as the most travelled, the most cultivated, and the most agreeable personage in their narrow world. He was no longer one amongst the million, as when he was swallowed up in the gulf of London, or in the stream of tourists which flooded the Continent. He found himself the chief man of the place, and he enjoyed the distinction.

CHAPTER THE NINETEENTH.

A BLOW IN THE DARK.

FOR a few months the pleasure of being flattered and courted by all about him was sufficient for Robert Waldron, and he gave himself up to it with the zest of one who had for some time been a stranger to such tokens of esteem. But there was

a secret fetter chafing him. He could not bear to think that there was one street of the town where he must not set his foot, and one house which he must not pass. There was the galling and bitter feeling of not being free to go where he would. He had his hours of sentimental memory, and moments of regret, which would not die, though it slept for long periods; and in both of these moods he longed to see again the house where John Morley dwelt, and from which he had stolen away Rose.

A feverish desire possessed him from time to time to meet John Morley himself, and to judge with his own eyes whether he had wrought him so great a wrong as his father described. Hester, too, stood before his memory as the grave, fair, pleasant child of whom he had been so fond, and who had loved him with such childish devotion. The mere fact that he was prohibited from entering the chapel where his father and sister worshipped, made it seem the most desirable place to attend; and he chafed every Sunday when they set out to their early service, leaving him behind for the later hours of the church. He grew to listen with morbid attention to the tittle-tattle of chapel affairs which had formerly bored him so much, that he might catch the name of John Morley or Hester—names which stung him with a not altogether unpleasant pain.

It was not in Robert Waldron's nature to resist and master the inclination which had taken possession of him. He had never conquered any caprice. He began to haunt the street stealthily in the long dark nights of winter, after the shutters of the houses were put up, and there was no light except that of the far-apart lamps. It was an old-fashioned street, reminding him of those in foreign towns; and at night, when he was recognised by none, in his great-coat buttoned up to the chin, and his felt hat drawn over his face, he came now and then upon scenes which amused him, and enlivened the dull routine of his country life.

But of the home of John Morley there was nothing to be seen, except the closed doors and windows. It stood in the darkest part of the street, in the middle distance between two lamps, and never did a single gleam of light appear upon its black front. Sometimes he remained in the doorway of an empty house opposite, smoking his cigar, while he awaited some token of the interior life, but there came none. All was black and still as a grave.

It became at length a necessary penance to him to haunt the dwelling, and keep a sentinel's watch upon its doors and windows. He would leave the comfort, and repose, and shelter of his father's house, to march with heavy steps to and fro before this house which he had made desolate, with a vague sense of atoning for his sin by his voluntary exposure to discomfort, almost amounting to pain, at the same time that he was satisfying

his own capricious curiosity. It was little else than the purposeless disquietude of a purposeless nature.

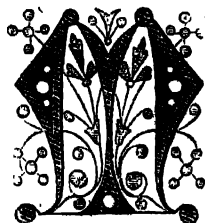
The habit grew upon him so strongly that when Mr. and Miss Waldron went up to London, upon the reopening of Parliament, he stayed behind—for a few days only, he said, not caring to confess to himself the whim that bound him to the place. He soon fell into a daily routine, ending every night, when it was darkest, in patrolling the forbidden street, and smoking his cigar under the closed

window of the room where Rose had left all the traces of her habitation in that house. The shutters of the window were always closed, but Robert knew nothing of that. He could not run the risk of passing it by daylight.

He was sauntering past the silent house one night, a little later than usual, with his arms folded and his head bowed down, when there fell suddenly upon him, how or whence he knew not, a blow which felled him to the ground.

END OF CHAPTER THE NINETEENTH.

MY EXPERIMENT.



Y dog was looking very scrubby about the back. I thought he was going to have the mange—not that I knew mange if I saw it, only it was a sort of word that sounded like the look of that dog's back. So I went to a friend who knew a deal about dogs (which I don't), and said mine was going to have the mange—what was good for it? Sulphur, he said, was the best thing to use; safe cure for it; no difficulty. I didn't know whether the sulphur should be taken as a pill, or put on like an ointment; all I knew was that he said "sulphur," and I did not choose to expose my ignorance by asking.

I concluded I would try the effects of a wash first.

I went into a grocer's, and asked for three-penn'orth of soft-soap, saying in an off-hand way, "Kills fleas, doesn't it?" I had never seen soft-soap before (I never want to see it again; but let that pass), so I was interested in its appearance when I got a lump, about the size of my two fists, of a stodgy, moshy, clammy-looking mass, resembling a mixture of sand and half-frozen honey. The man wrapped it up in a piece of paper, and I shuddered at the feel of it, as I put it into my coat-pocket.

"Thanks—good morning." "Mornin', sir—thank you." Some men always say "Thank YOU." And, self-satisfied, I went my way, the noble hound (N.B.—Cross between a general mongrel and a pine log) following me unconscious of his fate.

It was in the back-yard that the deed was done. With a generosity worthy of a better cause, I had brought down from my bed-room my own bath—one of those round, shallow, milk-pan affairs—and had filled it about two inches deep with lukewarm water.

Then came the scratch; I use this word metaphorically, but it became literal before the operation was over—as the paint that is *not* in my bath can testify.

I knew no more about the application of soft-soap than of sulphur, but I thought that I could guess how to use the former, which I imagined to be harmless; while with the sulphur I might have done it wrong, and been had up for culpable homicide. O Experientia!

Cook kindly pinned the sacking cover of her travelling-box round me, to keep off the splashes, and provided a square of old carpet, folded up small, so as to be soft, for me to kneel on.

I lifted the dog into the bath, and held him by the scruff, while he madly plunged, kicked, and struggled in his anxiety to get out, ploughing up the bright paint at the bottom in long beautiful furrows—four of them, parallel, at a stroke. To do the dog justice, however, he did not waste the paint. At the end of each nail-rut was a sweet little coil, all ready to be stuck down in the furrow again by any one who knew how. I did not know how.

With my right hand I applied the soft-soap. It never struck me that it might act like ordinary soap does when rubbed into hair; but it did—only more so. If it had struck me I might have been content with using a lump—say about the size of a piece of mud; but, being in ignorance, I calmly and systematically plastered that dog until all my three-penn'orth was gone, and the faithful beast looked like a stuffed brown-tabby cat with its complexion a little faded.

Then the wash really began. Taking some water in my hand, I set to to work up the soap, commencing on the back. At first there was no effect, and my hand slipped about like an eel spiralling on a greasy pole—downwards. Presently a tinge of white appeared, and gradually spread and spread. This was lather. I think I'll alter the type of that sentence, and say, "This *was* lather." It WAS! It rose, and rose, and rose; it spread; it widened out; it hung down, and stuck out in front and behind far beyond the last hairy extremities of dog. Still I persevered, and still the lather increased, till the four legs were one solid

pedestal of white, and all semblance of animal shape was lost in soap.

Then I began to wash the soap off, but the more I washed it off, the more it didn't go. It only increased and thickened, and I began to feel discouraged.

I knew the dog was there—somewhere—because I hadn't seen him go away; but the only sight I had had to remind me of him was one great bubbling, frothing, hissing, seething, effervescent mass of lather, which grew and grew, and rounded off at the corners, till it looked like a huge, steaming, animated snowball.

I grew more discouraged. I saw something must be done, or something else might happen to the dog. Presently a thought struck me, and I hit it back. I lifted that mass up, and carried it to the scullery. There was a tap, and also a pump, over the sink. Holding the dumpling with the part where the head would be under the tap, I turned on the water, and got cook to pump on the tail part.

The stone of the sink was soon hidden from

sight in a snowy covering. Presently two spots of dog appeared, deep down in two chasms of lather. Then I grew hopeful, and shifted the entirety a bit, so that more transformation might ensue. At last I was able to welcome a considerable portion of my old friend, when I began to rub what I could see of him, and lo, *more white arose!* This went on, and I finally treated the dog like somebody else's riddle, and gave him up.

Discarding the box-cover, I sallied forth with him into the wood, and, as I proceeded towards the pond by the brick kilns, he left behind him along the heather a bright, glistening, gleaming track, as if some gigantic snail had passed that way. But the pond was reached, and two masterly immersions (I say it with conscious pride) settled him. He came out clean, wet, and happy.

Happy?—Well, that is speaking comparatively.

Now that I come to look back, I find that I haven't exactly shown how to clean dogs after all; but I have shown one way how *not* to clean them, and that's a step in the right direction.

My dog has got a cold now.

F. W. T.

AFTER THE BATTLE.



ALL cold and lone on the ground
we found him,

The brave young spirit had
passed away;

And as we folded his cloak
around him,

We thought how nobly he
fought that day.

Bright drops of dew through the curls were
gleaming,

That lay caressing the boyish brow;

On! that pallid face in the moonlight beaming

Is ever rising before me now.

A broken sword near his hand was lying,

His mother's picture, a lock of hair;

And to his heart he had clasped, while dying,

The little cross that she used to wear.

That fair young head on the ground reposing,

The white face turned to the starlit skies,

How still it lay while strange hands were closing

The heavy lids o'er the once bright eyes!

'Twas then we thought how that light foot never

Again should beat on the cottage floor;

The joyous laughter was hushed for ever,

That blithely rang through the open door.

'Twas then we pictured his mother kneeling

To kiss the pillow his cheek had prest;

From happy comrades a pale girl stealing,
To sing the songs that he loved the best.

We thought how they who with smiles did greet him,
Could find none dearer to take his place;

The noisy children that ran to meet him,
Would watch in vain for his pleasant face.

The father's eyes would grow dim while telling

The daring deeds of his gallant boy,

And gloom would fall on the little dwelling

That once re-echoed with sounds of joy.

But, ah! what heart could be half so lonely

As hers that pillowed his infant head,

And sweetly crooned as a mother only

Can croon when bent o'er her darling's bed?

Perhaps she'll steal while they all are sleeping,

And twine her arms round his empty chair,

When the moonbeams pale, through the window
creeping,

Fall soft and bright on her silvery hair.

The little cross from his cold hand taking—

One parting look at his face—and then,

With trembling fingers and hearts nigh breaking,

We laid it down on his breast again.

And, with a prayer for the thousand mothers

Who nightly watch till the shadows flee,

We left him there, for we knew that others

Would need our help, ah! far more than he.

DAPHNE.



"THE FLOWERS SHE FLINGS AWAY."

RARE eyes that make a twofold sun
 Upon the world to shine,
 Red lips that turn the ruby dull,
 A face and form divine;
 A footstep fleet as that of fawn,
 A blush as bright as rosy dawn,
 My Daphne, all are thine.

But, ah! why should that glorious sun
 For me o'erclouded be,
 And lips that answer others' jests
 Ne'er give one smile to me?
 Why should morn's flush grow dark as night,
 And oft when I appear in sight,
 My Daphne fail to see?

In vain I twine a garland fair,
The flowers she flings away ;
In vain my verse breathes fond conceits,
She scorns each tender lay.
And if I whisper words of love,
And swear by all the stars above,
My Daphne—goes away.

Yet still my harp is tuned to sing
Of Daphne, spite of scorn,
Since the most perfect joy I have
Is from sweet Daphne drawn.

If she despise the love I bear,
No willow-wreath be mine to wear,
Though slighted love I mourn.

Apollo-like, my brows I'll crown,
Through her most sweet diadem,
With laurel ; for my constant song
Of Daphne, fame shall gain ;
For Daphne keeps my heart, and I
Am captive, with no heart to fly,
No wish to break my chain.

JULIA GODDARD.

THE CATACOMBS AT KIEV.



ELL," observes my companion, leaning rejoicingly over the bulwarks, on the third morning of our voyage up the Dnieper, "this last bit atones for all the rest !"

And well may he say so, though it must be confessed that such a two days'

experience as we have had since leaving Kremenetschuk, requires a good deal of atonement to take away the taste of it. The brief bright glories of our coasting voyage around the Crimea, with its cloudless skies, splendid scenery, and well-appointed steamers, have vanished like a dream ; and in their place we have had a cabin about as large as a sentry-box, and as clean as a dog-kennel, a panorama consisting chiefly of sand-banks and dead trees, and a set of passengers who smoke all day with the windows shut, and play cards all night with four candles lighted.

Once past Kaniova, all this is forgotten. The dark waves of heathy hill which follow each other to the horizon, crested with a spray of dancing leaves, which the rising sun touches with living fire ; the great bastions of naked rock, broken here and there by a shady dell, through which a little brook runs prattling to welcome Father Dnieper ; the endless clusters of wood-crowned islets, mirroring their drooping boughs in the broad smooth stream below ; the quaint little villages, peeping like shy children from the shadow of their encircling forests—are all picturesque in the highest degree. But all this is as nothing to the picture which presents itself when, passing under the magnificent railway bridge that forms one of the chief wonders of the place, we come suddenly upon the great wave of golden cupolas, and terraced gardens, and tall white towers, and dark monuments, and many-coloured houses, that rolls up along the western shore—all which, dipped in the brief bright splendour of the autumn sunshine, burst upon us in one blaze of glory.

"Yonder's the telegraph," says one of our fellow-passengers, a fat, jolly little retired major, whose sole mission in life is apparently to tell stories about his own countrymen. "Did I tell you how it broke down when it was first started ? Every station, you know, had a clerk appointed to it, with strict orders to repeat exactly whatever signals might be made by his right or left-hand correspondent. Well, it happened that the man at the first station beyond Koursk was a young lad who had just been jilted by his sweetheart, and he, in despair, hanged himself upon one of the telegraph posts. His next neighbour seeing this, and taking it for a signal of some kind, immediately followed suit, and the end of it was that all the telegraph clerks from Koursk to Kiev hanged themselves in due order, leaving the line completely unofficered !"

Half an hour later, we step ashore, and are safely ferried to the Upper Town, across the sea of black mud that covers the Podoll or lower quarter. The first duty of an Englishman, on entering a strange place abroad, is of course "to see what there is for dinner," to do full justice thereto, and then to grumble at it as "beggary foreign trash," all which we religiously accomplish within two hours of our landing. But this being done, and the sun still high in the sky, we begin to meditate a sortie.

"What's to be the first move ?"

"The Catacombs, of course !" says my companion, rising from his seat, and instinctively assuming that look of stern endurance wherewith John Bull goes forth to the severe but necessary penance of "seeing all that's to be seen." "They seem to be the great show of the place, so it's just as well to begin with them."

"If they can beat the Grotto of Adelsberg, or the underground Temple of the Sun at Heliopolis, or the Tombs of the Kings at Jerusalem, I'll forgive them," answer I ; "but never mind—we'll abuse them now, and admire them after we're gone."

Another quarter of an hour sees us *en route* for the Petcherski Monastery, which, crowning the higher

of the two precipitous ridges on which the Upper Town is built, must have been a formidable citadel in the days when gunpowder was not. Tartar and Petcheneygan, Pole and Turk, have tried this ascent before us, and met, if historians speak truly (which they seldom do), a very warm reception. Even we ourselves—"come we in peace or come we in war"—find it anything but easy work. A drive over a Russian pavement, in a Russian vehicle, is (even for one who has been in Palestine or Brazil) the best substitute for breaking on the wheel which modern civilisation has invented; and the higher streets are a pretty close imitation of the stair of a ruined light-house. Nor does the surrounding panorama offer much compensation: for Kiev, like Smyrna or Constantinople, or Rio de Janeiro, is beautiful only when seen from the outside.

The day has clouded, and the rain that fell during dinner has given to the place that damp, cheerless, forsaken look, characteristic of a Russian city on a dull day. The sky is gloomy as the close of a fashionable novel; the few passers-by look sulkily at us, as if we were in some way to blame for the general discomfort; the tall white houses stand quaintly up against the leaden sky, as if conscious of some flagrant misdeed, but determined to brazen it out; and everywhere there is a chill, dreary, desolate feeling, as though the sun had just become bankrupt, and all nature were holding a meeting of his creditors.

Even our driver appears to have something on his mind, and instead of laughing and chattering as usual, plods silently along with the look of a man conveying two desperate malefactors to instant execution.

But at last we crown the ridge, and see the great white battlement of the monastery rising up, in all its solid strength, between us and the sky. Huge and ancient and moss-grown, with its quaint crenelled turrets, and its vast iron-clamped gates, it scarcely seems to belong to the living world; and I should hardly be surprised to find an enchanted horn hanging at the gate, and, on sounding it, to see the heavy doors swing open of themselves, revealing the couchant hounds, and slumbering sentinels, and tomb-like silence of the Sleeping Beauty's Palace. And, indeed, when the gate *does* open, and a tall, stately old monk, with his long white beard flowing down over his dark frock, admits us to the vast, silent, grass-grown courtyard within, we do in very truth seem to be passing from the world of the living to that of the dead.

And for the next two hours we are centuries back into the past, surrounded on every side by the shadows of the things that *were*. Quaint little turrets, whence, ages ago, the sentinels looked keenly over the great plain below, watching for the gleam of Tartar spears along the horizon; rude

bas-reliefs, glittering with a barbaric profusion of ornament; shadowy cloisters, in which two or three robed and hooded figures are gliding ghost-like to and fro; quiet little churches, the same in every detail as those in which the simple faith of the Slavonic races has found its ideal since the day when the rough-hewn image of Peroun fell before the reforming zeal of St. Vladimir. There are all the familiar details, as I have seen them scores of times on the boundless steppes of Central Russia: the quaint little cupola and painted front; the low, narrow doorway; the rude pictures, each with its tiny lamp burning in front of it; the sacred vestments hanging upon the wall; the open space in the centre for the worshippers. This is one of those national symbols which never pass away, preserving, amid an age of railways and telegraphs, the living impress of the time when bears prowled around the site of Moscow, and marsh frogs croaked over that of St. Petersburg.

But, as my business-like companion justly remarks, "all this is not the Catacombs," and after two hours' hard sight-seeing, we begin to think it nearly time for a look at what we originally came to see.

Accordingly I seize upon a patriarchal old fellow who is gliding across one of the courts, and inquire the way to the "Podzemelie." The patriarch cannot say, but, if it please Heaven, he will ask Brother Constantine. Brother Constantine, being produced, is equally ignorant; but, with the blessing of the saints, he will ask Brother Theodosius. Brother Theodosius minutely directs us wrong, as do three or four others in succession; and it is not till after a prolonged game of hide-and-seek, and a good deal more tramping about in the wet mud than is altogether agreeable, that we finally hit the right scent, and come out in front of a heavy door, studded with knobs of iron, around which three or four other visitors are already grouped in silent expectation.

A long, gaunt, cadaverous monk (fit porter to the nether world) comes up and opens the door. We follow him down a long dark passage cut in the face of the hill, and terminating at length in a small square chamber, dimly lighted by a hanging lamp, and unpleasantly like a torture-chamber in the Inquisition, or in the old castles of the Rhineland.

Are we all to be converted to the orthodox faith *volens volens*? Is that a rack half visible in the corner yonder? or will this lamp overhead presently disgorge a shower of boiling oil for our especial benefit? But the supposed rack turns out to be merely a long oaken box, from which our conductor takes a packet of consecrated tapers, and proceeds to distribute them, at the rate of ten kopecks (about threepence English) apiece. This done, he unlocks a small door which we have

hitherto overlooked, and right before us gapes the entrance of the Catacombs. At sight of the black, narrow, tomb-like mouth, barely large enough for one man to enter upright, our followers are manifestly staggered, and they seem but little reassured by the suggestive remark of our cadaverous leader: "Mind you keep together, for if one gets parted from the rest, God help him!"

My comrade, however, with a truly British contempt for anything purely imaginative, steps boldly forward; the rest, lighting their tapers, follow like a flock of sheep; the heavy door closes behind us, and we descend.

I will not attempt to describe that next hour. It was a thing to remark that (except by our guide himself) not a word was spoken from the time that we entered. Down in these sunless caverns, shut in by the gloom and silence of the grave, all sense of companionship is utterly blotted out. Touching each other at every step, we are still, every one of us, as utterly alone as if upon a rock in mid-ocean.

In the blue ghastly glimmer of our tapers, the clammy earth below, the low ponderous roof above, and the damp, rugged, misshapen rocks on either side, have a weird unearthly look; and the black mouths of the rock-tunnels yawn dismally on every side, and channels upon channels wind away into the darkness, till I am inclined to think the whole scene a monstrous nightmare, and this dreary labyrinth but the maze of a troubled dream, from which I shall presently awake to the freshness and brightness of the living world.

And so we plod onward, ever onward, the echo of our steps sounding strangely loud amid the dead utter silence. Not a bat flits overhead, not a mouse rustles below. Life has no place in these ghostly solitudes; but they *are* peopled nevertheless, by inhabitants well worthy of them. On a sudden the gleam of our tapers is flashed back by jewels and cloth of gold, and a tall, commanding figure starts up as if by magic from a deep niche on our right. Its head is crowned with a jewelled mitre, its robes gay with splendid embroidery; but from beneath the gorgeous trappings gape the rattling jaws and eyeless sockets of a skeleton, and the rich patriarchal staff is clutched by the lean fingers of the grave.

We pass hastily on, only to encounter fresh repetitions of the hideous mockery; and the sudden apparition of these bedizened spectres, amid the utter blackness and silence of this great sepulchre, has an indescribably ghastly effect. In these noisome dens lived and died, in days when men thought to serve God by renouncing every duty of man, scores of those filthy maniacs called "Eastern Saints;" and here they still remain, watching through countless years the scene of their impious folly.

The awe which at first overwhelmed us changes little by little to unmitigated disgust; and I think there is not one of us who does not draw a long breath of relief when (after a lapse of time that seems endless) we hear the grating of a key in its rusty lock, and emerge into the light of day once more.

AT A PARISH MEETING.



ASTER WEEK is in many parishes a troublous one to the parochial authorities. Churchwardens are then legally to be appointed in vestry, and the opportunity is generally taken to execute other parish business while those whom it concerns are gathered together.

In many a small country parish, the only storm which during the year disturbs its little teacup, takes place then; so it is no wonder that the troublesome influences of the vernal equinox are dreaded by some, and eagerly looked forward to by others of a more combative disposition.

Farmer Hobbs, whose "seat in church has been taken away by the churchwardens" (to use his own language), vows that he will then revenge his grievance; Butcher Nobbs, who hates his parson, intends to have a gird at him at the same time; while Brown, Jones, Smith, and a

host of independent parishioners, who have fanciful grudges, slights, or ill-humours to work off, mean to go down to the combat, determined to show that they will not be put upon by any one.

The parochial authorities know that they will have an evil time of it. Road-surveyors, tax-gatherers, sidesmen, and wardens make common cause in their misery, and doggedly set their teeth for defiance. They are well aware that they will be assailed by every conceivable grumble anent bad roads, foul drains, overcharged rates, and unwise expenditure of parochial funds on widows and paupers; while the whole atmosphere of Little Easeton is dangerously electrical with general discontent on political and ecclesiastical subjects, which, somewhat illogically, it must be confessed, will discharge itself upon the devoted officials' heads on the day of the meeting.

The vicar, being by virtue of his office a man of peace, for some weeks beforehand fits on all the defensive armour that he possesses, meekly

accepts Easter Week as his time of humiliation, and schools himself with many a classical "gnome" and rustic proverb to fall softly, to creep tightly into his shell, to grin and bear, take a kicking quietly, etc. etc.

After all, he reflects, it is for but one night in the year. It is no wonder, however, that for many nights beforehand the worthy man's dreams are very unlike those which Queen Mab engenders in the typical parson, "tickling his nose with a tithe-pig's tail as 'a lies asleep," and have a closer affinity to the soldier's visions

"Of breaches, ambuscadoes, Spanish blades."

He will be criticised, dissected, pierced to the quick by irate partisans and parishioners in a hundred places that evening. His sermons will be pulled to pieces, his school-work depreciated, his parochial policy derided. A nest of hornets will buzz round his devoted ears while the meeting lasts; and a stranger would think that revolution and democracy would ever after reign triumphant in Little Easeton, and defy all the powers that be.

But the stroke of eleven p.m. quiets the whole turmoil. Next day the combatants are as friendly and respectful to him as usual. Like Virgil's excited bees, their animosities have been laid by a trifle, by a few strokes of the church-bell.

The good vicar then resumes his even spirits; rubbing his hands, he reflects what a glorious safety-valve to parochial discontent is the annual ebullition allowed by Easter Week. All parties are satisfied, and nothing much done; so the little parish subsides into its usual torpor.

It was our good fortune last year to be staying with the clergyman of Boldsby, a little village in Mudshire, when the annual Parish Meeting fell due. By his kindness we accompanied him as a visitor, and were much amused with the proceedings.

During the prescribed term of days on which the notice calling it was exhibited on the church-door, the vicar had suffered a preliminary martyrdom at the hands of his wife. She was of an eminently combative disposition in theory (though a hard word, or even a look, from her liege lord would reduce her to tears), and busied herself in egging on the latter to the fray.

"There is little Johnson, the draper, dear, who is sure to attack you about the flannel charity. I hope you will put him down well!" "That man Thomson said very hard things of you last year; be ready this time, and hint about the poor-rates to him." "Farmer Harrison may very well be told in polite language to mind his own business if he alludes to the school buildings," etc. etc.

The meek Churchman reminded us of Hooker patiently bearing the attacks of his shrewish wife, so gently did he endure this baiting.

At length the important day came. In compliance with time-honoured custom, the church-bell rang out two or three strokes, while the vicar and one or two parishioners greeted each other at the door of the sacred edifice. As the vestry was only large enough to hold the parson in his surplice, a motion was formally made to adjourn the meeting to the village inn, which was at once passed. Mine host of the "Blue Boar" had a fire lighted in readiness in his little parlour (the ceiling of which might be touched with the hand), and the quaint old picture of the prodigal son leaving his father's house, in top-boots and a brilliant blue swallow-tail coat, with which it was hung, glittered in the cheerful warmth.

The vicar took the seat which the law assigns him as chairman, viz., the arm-chair next the fire; and the little rickety table, marked with many a circle, the trace of brimming cups, was strewn with the parish account-books.

Somewhat apart from the general assemblage we took our place, in all the conscious modesty of a social philosopher, and the fray was ready to begin.

The vicar said a few words of introduction, depreciating personalities, and hoping the meeting would confine itself to the work in hand, and then proceeded to inspect the parish rate-books.

It was a typical scene of English country life. The two dim mould-candles, with their insignificant light falling on a dozen determined countenances, signified the contemptible nature of the struggles which worked within these men. One of the road-surveyors, a heavy stolid-looking farmer, was supported by his brother. The miller, in his Sunday best, a little sprinkled with flour, sat next them. At his side was a sturdy yeoman, who would yield to no one, whose blood was not easily aroused, but when once up was apt to be too precipitate for the address demanded in such contests. Then came the grocer, whose face was a curious study, a mixture of dogged and servile elements, too apt to remind a spectator of his own compound of sand and sugar. The squire, a good-natured rustic Gallio, sat next two cousins, who owned a very large portion of the parish, and in obstinacy, invective, and illogicality yielded to none. They were emphatically "good haters," and it was quite easy to perceive that, with the exception of the easy-going squire, all the company owed them a grudge.

The vicar's asking an innocent question on the highway rates was the signal for the elder of the cousins (himself chief road-surveyor) to run up his fighting ensign.

"Our roads are as good as any in the parishes round."

"They are better than in many of them," echoed his younger kinsman.

Yeoman (seeing the opportunity for firing a shot): "I can't agree with you. Mr. Busyblades was riding by the other day, and says he to me says he, 'Why don't ye keep your ruts better filled up? I don't like to ride a valuable horse over them.' Them's the words he said."

Elder Cousin (firing up): "I wish Mr. Busyblades would mind his own business: who tells him to come riding over our roads?"

Younger One (bringing up reserves): "Mr. Busyblades has not a valuable horse to ride over these roads."

Naturally, some horse-laughter ensued at this sally. A young farmer, who had hitherto sat indifferent, now protests gently, "Mr. Busyblades is my uncle. I think the absent ought scarcely to be abused here."

Elder Cousin (angrily): "Then he should mind what he says."

Vicar (interposing): "Don't you think this is but slightly relevant to the question before us? Suppose we pass on."

Younger Cousin: "I don't mean to be silent and let myself be burked when my cousin's road-management is attacked by you, Mr. Vicar."

Vicar (alarmed): "I, Mr. Payout? Excuse me, but I said nothing!"

Elder Cousin (wrathfully lashing his tail): "Then you should say something. Who cares for Mr. Busyblades, I should like to know, eh?" (and he glares around). "It's yower waggons" (addressing the other road-surveyor) "as does the mischief; yow are always leading cork" (chalk) "and manna" (manure), "yow are, when the roads are soft."

The reader should be told that down in Mudshire to *tufey* a man by calling him "yow," and speaking of "yower" things, instead of "you" and "your" things, is supposed to be the most exasperating form of insult.

Stolid Farmer: "Whoy, yower waggons goes on 'em, and so shall mine!" (and he buttons up his pockets defiantly).

Brisk interchange of "No, they don't!" "Who said they didn't?" "What do I care?" "Yower another!" etc. etc., from the irate combatants, much to the delight of the rest. At length the storm subsides with a threat from the elder cousin: "I won't boone" (*Anglicè*, repair) "yower farm road for yow any more!"

"Yow needn't. I'll tell yow what it is, every morning yow go a-hunting, yower labourers hope yow'll break yower neck before yow come back."

Muttered grumbles from both cousins; elder too exasperated to trust himself to speak, while the younger says, "Ah, yow were always a snake in the grass!"

Intense gratification sits on all faces except those of the enraged combatants, as this lively little inter-

change of personalities concludes fyttè the first of the meeting.

"Blest if I've heard anything so good for many a meeting!" whispers the miller to his neighbour.

The vicar succeeds at length in calming matters, and calls them to the next question for the evening.

This was the letting of the parish lanes to be grazed by cows and sheep. In due form, according to ancient custom, the vicar stuck a pin an inch below the light of one of the candles, and the highest bidder before it fell down, as the tallow gradually melted, would hold the grass till next year.

The cousins Payout took occasion to make a few caustic remarks, relevant to nothing, about the little use these lanes were to them (they had held them last year), as others would send diseased sheep through them, and so infect their own flocks.

All fired up at this. A very pretty quarrel ensued. The much-enduring vicar leant back in the chair, with a despairing expression on his face. The humorous miller said nothing, but chuckled at the commotion. Taking the opportunity to come in and poke the fire, by way of hearing what was going on, the innkeeper received orders from the company for divers glasses of brandy and gin-and-water—"and, hark'ee, some pipes."

The entrance of these convivial elements acted as a wholesome sedative to the combatants' ruffled plumes. The vicar asked a poor farmer on a small holding if he would kindly drink his glass of brandy for him, as he did not feel quite equal to it himself; and the elder Mr. Payout, after the obstinate yeoman had bid four pounds for the lanes, leisurely filling his long clay, proceeded to stir up the fray afresh.

"My cousin and I think four pounds quite enough; but yet I should like to grub my *hogs* and *thieves*" (*Anglicè*, sheep at various stages of growth) "on them. I should not much mind giving, for just this one year——"

A loud roar of laughter ensued, in the midst of which he puffed ferociously at his pipe, and clenched his fists with rage under the table. The pin had fallen, and his opponent was master of the lanes he coveted. Even the vicar was obliged to laugh.

"That's a good un!" "Sarve 'im rate!" "Thowt 'ow it'd be!" etc., resounded in the midst of the general hilarity; while the discomfited Messrs. Payout savagely glared at the meeting.

There existed, it seemed, in the village of Boldsby half a dozen mud-and-thatch buildings, called by courtesy cottages, with a few square yards of garden, in which, from time immemorial, deserving widows and broken-down labourers had been allowed to end their days free of rent. Of late years a faction had arisen in the parish, which wished to sell this

property, while the rest of the ratepayers desired to maintain things as they had always been. These factions were evenly balanced in strength, and hated each other with an intensity to which the quarrels of Guelphs and Ghibellines were but child's-play.

Every day throughout the long year the contending parties necessarily met, and saw their mutual hatred in each other's looks before a word was said; every day of the year the labourers in the fields, the goodwives at the ingle nook, the roysterers at the "Blue Boar," talked over, or rather fought over, these unfortunate "parish houses." Yet no decision was ever arrived at respecting them, and (as the surveyors refused to appoint new tenants), as fast as the old women who dwelt in them died out, the cabins fell into disrepair. Frost made sad havoc with them, and the "bairns" crept in and out of the mud walls at their play.

Only one was now inhabited, the others were in various stages of picturesque dilapidation, and the whole affair was the amusement of the countryside.

Annually, on the night of the Parish Meeting, there had been wont to be a passage of arms respecting these cottages. That night sager counsels appeared to have prevailed. By general consent the subject was tacitly waived. All sat smoking, with the houses in their thoughts, but no one liked to begin. Yet it would be clearly a monstrous anomaly for the meeting to have been held without a collision, and much would the respective wives flout the combatants did they separate after such tame proceedings.

As usually happens, the miller—the most moderate man of the assembly—by a chance remark embroiled the combatants.

"Mr. Payout," said he with pacific intent, "don't you think it would be a good thing, now the meeting is so unanimous, to settle about them parish houses?"

Shade of Achilles! did ever direr events spring from so trivial a cause? In a moment the two sides were at it: red in their faces, with excited puffs of smoke and much gesticulation, they argued, denounced, abused.

What did Mr. Vicar think? As a friend of the poor, he could not help standing up for the poor and desiring to retain the houses. Then Mr. Vicar was much to blame, said one side, and the others

felt inclined to sacrifice him to their resentment because he did not make use of more decided language.

There was much shuffling and whispering outside during this altercation; the chinks of the window-shutters being wide, half the clowns of the village were watching the proceedings through them.

Wearisome were the recriminations of both sides, and glad were we when at half-past eleven the discomfited Payouts rose in anger, flung down their pipes, and abruptly said "Good night!"

The victorious faction remained a moment, masters of the field, to congratulate each other and rub their hands in delight at the "fine meeting."

We wished them farewell and thankfully retired, the vicar very sore at the usual termination of the meeting, that, with all his address and patience, both parties had fallen foul of him.

"Of course this decides the question?" we asked innocently, on our way to the vicarage.

"Oh, dear, no!" replied he; "it possesses far too much vitality. What would country wits do without a good standing grievance? In fact, this parish-house question exactly resembles Sarhimmer, the wild boar of the Scandinavian mythology, that was killed and eaten after a long hunt by the heroes every evening, only to come to life again next morning for another hunt. It is my firm persuasion that my far-off successors will find the belief of the parish too strong to be resisted, that an Easter Meeting here is not even legal without a good wrangle over those miserable cottages. Good night! I am very weary of it all!"

There is no need to point the above narrative with a moral. The "parish houses" are but a figure of the insignificant nature of most rustic squabbles.

It may be added however, as a pendant, that about a month after the meeting above described, young Payout met a friend belonging to another parish at a neighbouring market, and after asking casually how his Parish Meeting went off, observed in all gravity (such is the Bæotian intellect of Mudshire)—

"Ah! sorry to hear it. Parson, of course, eh? Just like 'em! Well, you should have been at *our* Parish Meeting; all quite quiet and comfortable—nothing but Parliamentary language. And we have a vicar that for good sense would beat all the parsons round into pulpit cushions!"

THE FLY IN AMBER.

THE gleam that caught him here seems fixed,
and he
Of all the vanisht myriads visibly
Attains the golden immortality.

Type of the Poet perisht in his flame,
Who dies to live i' the lustre of a name,
And still be lookt at, fossilised in fame.
GERALD MASSEY.

HESTER MORLEY'S PROMISE.

BY HESBA STRETTON,

AUTHOR OF "THE DOCTOR'S DILEMMA," ETC. ETC.

CHAPTER THE TWENTIETH. AFTER THE ATTACK.

ROBERT WALDRON made a faint effort to defend himself, and to cry for help; but before he could do either, the blow, savage and revengeful, fell upon his head, and he felt nothing more. He lay motionless and lifeless upon the pavement in the dark corner where John Morley's house stood, and at an hour of the night when there were few passers-by.

When the stricken man opened his eyes again, feebly and with pain, he saw only a strange room, dimly lighted by a shaded candle set upon a table at the foot of the bed upon which he was lying. A face he did not know was turned towards him, with the evident solicitude of one who was watching for the first sign of returning consciousness. It was the face of a young man of about four-and-twenty, frank and pleasant, with a professional look upon it that spoke unmistakably of a medical student. A small case of instruments lay upon the bed close to his hand, while his fingers gently pressed Robert Waldron's pulse. He closed his eyes again in a stupor of bewilderment and exhaustion, but in an instant a cup was held to his lips.

"Drink," said an authoritative voice; "it is a cordial that will revive you."

The draught fulfilled its work so well that he re-opened his heavy eyelids and gazed vacantly about him. He was lying in bed in a large low chamber, which he had certainly never seen before; his head was bound up tightly with fillets of linen, but when he attempted to raise his right hand to feel it, he was compelled to relinquish the effort, with a groan of pain.

"A dislocation of the shoulder," said the stranger, as if replying to a question, "and some heavy contusions about the head; done with a blunt instrument, a poker or large hammer. Do you think you can speak to me now?"

"Yes," answered Robert faintly.

"You ought not to speak at all," said the young medical man, in a tone of regret; "but I'm only passing through this town, and I must go on in the morning; so we must make the best of our circumstances. Tell me all you can recollect before this blow."

"Where am I?" asked Robert.

"Can't tell you," was the reply; "I found you on the pavement, and I knocked at the nearest door to ask for help. The people here don't know you. Are you a stranger like myself?"

"Stop a moment, let me think," said Robert.

It seemed an almost insurmountable difficulty to recall the events of the night; but after awhile he remembered where he had been standing when the savage and sudden attack was made upon him from behind. He tried to turn his head on the pillow, so as to bring his mouth nearer to the stranger's ear.

"What is their name?" he whispered.

"I don't know," said the stranger; "there is an old man and a girl—very good-hearted people. They don't know you; so most likely you don't know them."

"Couldn't you find it out?" he asked feverishly.

"Well, there are some book-shelves yonder," replied the attendant, "and I'll look to please you. But you must keep your strength, to tell me what complaint to make at the police-office. You must have been set upon savagely."

"Find out the name," urged Robert faintly.

His brain ached too much for any clear thought; yet he watched eagerly while the stranger took a book from the shelves on the wall and brought it to the light. It was bound in crimson morocco, richly embellished, with the edges of the leaves gilded; but upon opening it, it proved to be nothing but an old dog-eared fairy-book, with some of the pages torn, and all of them soiled with frequent reading.

"This is odd," said the student; "they must be lavish with their gilding and bookbinding here. There is no name in it; but I'll find another. I chose one of the handsomest-looking."

He brought a second volume to the light—a Bible, fastened with silver clasps. He opened the front page, and read in a cautious undertone, with a glance towards the closed door, "Hester Morley, from her loving mother, Rose Morley."

Robert Waldron shut his eyes, and turned his bruised and aching head towards the wall, trying to realise his position; but thought was impossible to him. There was only one thing clear to his mind, that nothing must be found out about him either in the house or the town. He slowly gathered together his strength, and without turning to the medical student, he asked, "Shall I be laid up here long?"

"That depends upon yourself," was the answer; "be calm, and a few days may see you well enough to give your evidence safely. Fret and fume, and you'll have brain fever. In the meantime, what shall I say to the police?"

"Nothing," said Robert.

"Nothing?" repeated the stranger; "you were all but murdered, man! You'll have a near touch yet; I wish I could stop and see you through it."

"Stop," said Robert, "I'm rich enough to make it worth your while. Say nothing about me in the town, and don't let anybody, doctor or nurse, come near me. I must not be known here. Do you understand? Not a soul must know about this."

He spoke with violent and warning pains in his throbbing temples, but he uttered these sentences

thought and memory, but all in vain. He had a dim perception of seeing always the same good-tempered, masculine face about him, and hearing the same gruff but not unpleasant accents whenever a voice penetrated to his brain; and he felt himself handled by strong skilful hands. But as to where he was, or who he was, or how he had been brought to this condition, or how long he had been in it, not a single ray of intelligence came across him. With no sensation except that he was all head—and that a bruised and aching head—



'TO TAKE A SEAT.'

emphatically, and with intense anxiety. The young man had leaned over him to catch his laboured tones, and continued to look searchingly into his face when he had done. "Ah!" he said, "some mystery, is it? Well, well, I'm willing; so set your mind at ease. You'll have enough to do to keep yourself calm. Neither doctor nor nurse shall come near you, unless there is more danger than I foresee. And your own mother would hardly know you. There—be satisfied. I'll take care of you."

Robert Waldron scarcely heard the end of this speech, for a heavy stupor, whether of sleep or insensibility, crept over him again. There were intervals during the next forty-eight hours in which his mind tried to struggle towards some lucid

Robert Waldron lay under John Morley's roof; while the housekeeper at Aston Court ascribed his absence to one of his sudden whims, and his father and sister believed him quietly and safely at home.

CHAPTER THE TWENTY-FIRST.

LAWSON'S ATTIC.

THE monotony of John Morley's household had been exceedingly disturbed by this strange incident, surpassing all the fanciful events which Hester sometimes allowed her imagination to invent. That such a dark and villanous crime should have been perpetrated at their very door, in the secure streets of an English town; that an assassin should have

been lurking in the shadow of their walls, seemed too incredible for belief. Yet there lay the intended victim in her own chamber, the only one which had been ready for his reception; and the other stranger, who stated frankly who he was, and where he came from and was going to, was watching over him with the patient fidelity of an old friend. He had told her that the almost murdered man desired to keep the crime a secret, but this only increased her amazement.

As for John Morley, he had been scarcely moved from his imperturbable gloom, and appeared willing to accept the event as one of ordinary occurrence. He considered it his duty to appear every morning at the door of the patient's room, to inquire how he was getting on, when his voice seemed to have a troubling effect upon the almost insensible form of the sufferer. But having discharged this duty, he did not care to discuss the circumstance as Hester would have liked. He told her she must wait for the stranger's recovery before her questions could be answered; and then he hastened to shut himself up with his books. He was no more communicative with the neighbours who, hearing various confused rumours, found some excuse for invading his solitude.

A gentleman, who was a stranger, had met with an accident at his door, and a friend of his had asked shelter and help for him. That was all he knew, said John Morley. Neither had Hester an opportunity of talking over the marvellous occurrence with Lawson, for he had been unaccountably absent from his workshop for two days. Such a thing had never happened before in Hester's memory, except about six months ago, when he had travelled to Southampton to meet his mother, who had lived till then with her only daughter in a small town in Burghundy.

The third morning, when she found the attic empty, she resolved to seek Lawson out in his own home and ascertain the cause of his absence. She had never been to Lawson's dwelling, and, strange to say, scarcely knew where he lived. She had been so accustomed to know that he was upstairs in the attic the first thing in the morning and the last thing at night, that she had hardly ever thought of where he went to when he left the house, while he had never mentioned his own affairs, more than to tell her that his mother was coming over to him now her daughter was dead. All that Hester knew was that they lived somewhere in a court, which had its entrance nearly opposite the chapel at the top of the old-fashioned street.

She found admission to the court by a low narrow passage between two shops, where she had to walk carefully in semi-obscurity, until she came to a long close strip of rough pavement, around which were built tall thin houses, three storeys high, and but one room in breadth. A dull and murky winter sky

seemed to lie flat upon the roofs, closing them in with its grey and cold covering. Most of them were untenanted, as was plainly shown by their broken panes and rotting casements; and Hester directed her steps towards a door, which had "Public Bakehouse" painted above it. There was a small bankrupt-looking shop on the ground-floor, and, as Hester entered it, a middle-aged woman, wiping the dough from her hands, came forward to attend to her.

"Can you tell me where Lawson, Mr. Morley's bookbinder, lives?" she inquired.

"He lives here, miss," she answered, "in the top storey—both rooms—he and madam. You don't know madam, perhaps, miss?"

"Not at all," said Hester, with a new sentiment of curiosity.

"She's a foreigner," continued the woman mysteriously. "I charge half-a-crown more a month for that. Not that she's like a good many of them French. She's as clean as a nut; but she's queer. She has wood-ashes out of my oven, and puts 'em in a box, and sets it under her petticoats, instead of having a fire; which she'll be burned to death some day. It's six months since she's been here, and she's never set foot out of doors yet. She hasn't got a bonnet, I think; only a queer tall cap, as sets all the children to laugh. She can't speak a word of English, nor we a word of French; so we can't have much to do with one another, you know."

"She must have been very dull and lonely," said Hester self-reproachfully.

"No, bless you, miss!" answered the shopwoman; "she's as gay as can be, and sings like an old canary. You just hark up here."

She opened a door at the foot of a flight of steps, which was profoundly dark, and Hester heard a clear, pleasant old voice, failing a little in the higher notes, but set to a merry tune.

"That's the way up, miss," said the woman; "but as you've never been before, I'll go on first and show you the room."

Besides being in dense darkness, the staircase was a winding one, with no single step straight, and a thick rope, rather sticky and dirty to the touch, served in the stead of banisters. Beyond a faint glimmer from the open door below, there was not a gleam of light; and Hester only knew she was getting near the top by the increasing shrillness and vigour of the cheery song.

"I forgot to ask you if Lawson was at home," she said, checking her guide as she was about to knock at the door of the room from whence the sound proceeded. She had learned French from a master, and could read it fluently; but she was a little afraid of encountering some living Frenchwoman who, no doubt, could speak only in an unintelligible patois.

"Oh, he's at home," was the answer ; " he's been at home these two or three days, ill.—Mr. Lawson, here's a young lady come to see you and madam."

The song ceased the instant the door was opened, and a small, round, comely old woman met Hester, with a face as clear-cut, and fresh, and free from wrinkles as her own. She was curtsying, gesticulating, and talking, with as much ease and fluency in her limbs as in her tongue. Hester stood confused and abashed, but as she advanced farther into the room, the familiar voice of Lawson made itself heard.

"It is madame my mother, Miss Hester," he said ; "she is telling you that you are welcome."

He was seated near an open hearth, upon which burned a few smoky coals, held together by rusty andirons. The room, to English eyes, looked comfortable, even for the abode of a workman. The only good piece of furniture was a bed set in one corner, which was covered with a handsome counterpane of some scarlet stuff, with a large square pillow, the cover of which was as white as snow, resting upon it. For the rest, the chamber was poverty-stricken and squalid. A small window looked out upon the court, and in two other places in the sloping roof a pane of glass had been let in, through which the grey cold canopy of the sky could be seen. Three small crucifixes ornamented the bare mantel-shelf, and a chaplet of brown beads hung on a wall near them, balanced on the other side by a portrait, painted in showy colours, of a French actress in her theatrical costume.

Hester could not make all these observations at once, for her attention was concentrated upon Lawson. He looked ghastly, his face being more meagre and bleak than ever. He could scarcely raise himself from his seat, for his limbs trembled like those of a person barely recovered from some severe shock ; and while he stood he was obliged to support himself by the back of his chair.

"I'm not ill, Miss Hester," he said hastily ; "it's only upon my nerves. I shall be all right in a day or two ; but it was of no use coming to my work when I could do nothing. Look here."

He tried to hold out his hand, but it shook as if stricken with palsy ; and when she looked him in the face, the tears were rolling fast down his hollow cheeks.

"Lawson," she said sorrowfully, "you have been taking opium again."

"It's only on the nerves, Miss Hester," he sobbed. "Try to talk a bit to madame, my dear."

She turned away to look again at Lawson's strange mother. The old Frenchwoman was dressed well and tastily, though her clothes were poor ; and she wore a picturesque cap, rivalling the pillow-case in whiteness. All her gestures were lively

and flexible, as if nothing of the rigidity of old age had seized upon her joints. She motioned to Hester to take a seat beside her, and chuckled merrily to herself as she complied.

"If you would talk slowly," said Hester, trying timidly her own powers, "perhaps I could understand you a little."

"Seigneur !" she cried, "you speak my language ! Ah ! it is well—very well. Oh, what happiness ! I will speak to you very slowly in my own tongue."

The clean old face, with its complexion as soft as a child's, was flushed with a bright colour ; and her plump, shapely hands were raised in astonishment and delight.

"Ah, chère mademoiselle !" she exclaimed, beginning slowly, but falling quickly into a rapidity of utterance which bewildered Hester, "it is these six months that I have been here, and I have never heard a word of my own language except from my son ; never, never ! Ah ! but it is triste ; but when I feel ennui I sing a little song to myself, or I say a prayer to one of the dear little saints, and it is past, quite past, I assure you. My son is very good to me, and he earns a great deal of money in the service of monsieur your father : twenty francs a week, and sometimes twenty-five."

"Do you like England ?" inquired Hester, who felt her conversational power limited, and was glad to ask any question which could show an interest in the foreigner.

"Bah !" answered madame, with a grimace, "I was too old to leave my country for another. I never thought of quitting France, though I married myself to an Englishman. I would not come with him when he left Paris ; but when my daughter was dead I came to finish my life with my son, or take him back with me to Burgundy, where the sun shines and the grapes ripen. Here the sun never shines, but it peeps out sometimes in the summer. My son has put that glass in to catch the sunshine for me ; and when we are rich we are going home to Burgundy."

Lawson shook his head furtively, as if saying, "No."

"Yes, yes, yes !" cried the old lady, whose quick eyes caught her son's by-play. "I say, yes. I will not die out of Burgundy. I could not bear to be shut up here, but for that."

"But why do you shut yourself up ?" asked Hester.

"Why go out ?" she said, shrugging her shoulders. "No sun, no warmth, no friends, no gaiety. The bad children laughing at me ! All the world strange, and nobody to speak a word to me. No, no ; I can sing to myself here, and be as gay as I please all day long. Shall I sing a little song to you, my dear ?"

She settled herself upon her chair so as to give her hands free scope to accompany her song with appropriate gestures. A hundred little wrinkles as fine as thread puckered about the corners of her eyes, and her tongue so trilled and quavered and shook between her almost toothless gums, that Hester watched its rapid movement with amazement. When her song was ended, she clapped her own hands in applause, and hugged herself with her old arms, while she laughed and nodded merrily.

Madame Lawson presented so strange a contrast to her son that Hester was almost lost in wonder. Lawson had partially recovered himself, and was looking towards her with an expression which plainly enough asked the meaning of her unexpected visit. She was glad to regain the free use of her own tongue, and she spoke in her turn with a volubility and fluency to which the Frenchwoman listened with marks of lively astonishment and admiration.

"Lawson," she said, "have you heard nothing of what happened to us two nights ago? Do you know that some stranger, a man, was found almost dead at our very door? Have you heard nothing of it?"

"No," he answered, still apathetic from the use of the drug he had taken; "what became of him?"

"Another stranger, who was passing by, found him on the pavement, and brought him into our house. My father and I did all we could to help, and we carried him up-stairs to my room. The other stranger (I know his name now—Mr. Grant) is a surgeon, and knew exactly what to do, and he is staying with him still. Isn't it very strange, Lawson?"

Lawson's eyes regained more brightness as Hester spoke, and he appeared to shake off a little of his lethargy as he tried to ponder over the news.

"Do you know who it is?" he asked.

"No," said Hester, "he is quite a stranger to us; a man with a thick brown beard and moustache; he looks a little like a foreigner. My father knows nothing of him; how should he?"

"How often has he seen him?" inquired Lawson, in a sharp quick tone of interest.

"Only when he was carried in almost dead," she replied; "neither of us has seen him since. Mr. Grant does everything for him. But oh! Lawson, it was a dreadful sight. I should have thought such a thing could never have happened in our town. He was nearly, very nearly killed by some murderer."

Hester stopped, shuddering at the recollection, and Lawson did not speak for a minute or two.

"The master was at home when it happened?" he asked.

"He had come in only a few minutes before," said Hester; "he says he did not see anybody lying on the pavement then; but he would never see anything—my poor father! Besides it might have been done after he was in the house: nobody knows. And, Lawson, what do you think?—he is not going to let the police know anything about it."

"Not let the police know!" echoed Lawson.

"No; Mr. Grant says that he knows who struck him, and he wishes to screen him, and keep it all a secret."

"He is getting over it, then?" said Lawson.

"Yes; Mr. Grant says he will be able to get up in a few days. I shall see him then, and try if he will not tell me more about it. I am very curious—and I never knew what it was to be curious before."

Hester shook her head sagely, and laughed a little at her own unusual state of mind; but Lawson remained plunged in thought for some time. At last he looked up into her face with an air of deep anxiety.

"Miss Hester," he said, "don't you try to find out anything. There's many a thing had better remain a secret to you all your life. I should like to know who this man is; but don't you go asking him, or Mr. Grant either. Leave well alone, Miss Hester."

She was neither inclined nor prepared to obey him; but she did not provoke any further remonstrance by putting her dissent into words. In her solitary and self-directed life, Hester had learned to choose her own path without looking to any authority. She rose to take her leave, promising the old woman to come again soon to see her, and submitting with a rare and sweet smile to being kissed by her upon both cheeks, though her colour came and her face burned. It was so many years since any lips had touched her cheek, and then it had been Rose who had kissed her. Lawson preceded her down the winding staircase, and up the narrow entry into the street.

"I shall be back at work in the morning, Miss Hester," he said, "and I should very much like to set eyes on this gentleman."

CHAPTER THE TWENTY-SECOND.

A BUDGET OF NEWS.

"LITTLE ASTON, Feb. 21, 186—.

"DEAR CARL,—Where is Little Aston, and whatever is Grant doing there?' you are asking at this moment. Little Aston is a very small town, noticeable chiefly as a junction on the Midland Counties Railway, the town being nearly a mile from the station. Grant is being head doctor, nurse, and general *valet de chambre* for a stranger who narrowly escaped assassination in the streets of the

same small town three nights ago. I must explain to you how it all came about. You are aware that it is my usual luck to miss my train at a junction ; and this luck threw me, at nine o'clock last Wednesday night, upon the tender mercies of the good innkeepers of Little Aston. As I am not rich, I sought a more humble tavern than the great hotel in the square, and I turned up a narrow, old-fashioned, dimly-lighted street in search of one. Here I stumbled against a man lying across the pavement, who on examination proved to be not drunk, but half dead. There was not a sound to be heard in the street. I have learned since that every other night the police are sent out of the town into the country in pursuit of poachers—an admirable arrangement ! I knocked with all my might at the nearest door, and as soon as it was opened I carried in my man, and examined the extent of the mischief done. He had been wounded within an inch of his life. As he had neither blood nor time to lose, I demanded a room and a bed, which were immediately put at my disposal ; and here I have been ever since.

"The whole affair is queer, excessively queer. The gentleman—he is a gentleman, there is no mistake about that ; dress, jewellery, etc., are first-class, and his voice and language those of a well-born man—as soon as he recovered a little consciousness, begged me to keep this assault upon him a secret, and remain with him until he can go away, in order to avoid calling in a doctor and nurse. I have not any very particular business demanding me in any other part of the world, so I agreed to stay and bring him through it alone if there were no access of danger. I was anxious for the first forty-eight hours, but my anxiety is over now. He will do, and in another few days he and I may go on our separate ways ; though I rather expect the 'Good Samaritan' will get a handsome fee for his time and trouble upon this occasion.

"The household subjected to this unpleasant invasion is as interesting as my patient. It consists of a father and daughter, with one very ordinary maid-of-all-work. I wish you could see them, Carl. Don't let Annie read this letter. The girl (her name is Hester) is different to any young creature I have ever seen. She produces upon me the impression of having always lived in moonlight, and having never seen the sun. She reminds me of primroses with the scent of spring in them, but which one knows will die before the summer sun comes. Or she is like her namesake, Queen Esther—stately, austere, and beautiful, but with the pallor of famine in her cheeks as she stands meekly in the outer court, before the king has stretched out his royal sceptre to her. See how poetical I grow ! But this girl has been starving all her life. There has been a famine of sunshine, and

laughter, and music ; and she has grown up sad and pale. I should like to see her brought out into the full light, but I do not know how she could bear it.

"The father is a man bordering upon fifty, but he looks sixty, for his hair is snow-white, and his face seamed with lines. It is a grey mask, a dull, unnatural grey ; but it lights up at times as from some smouldering flame behind it, and you see intense light and heat in his eyes. Do you remember that story we read, when boys, of the Hall of Eblis, where each tortured ghost walks solitarily, with his hand pressed upon his breast, and whenever the hand is raised one can see a heart of fire beneath ? I have thought once or twice, when I have come unexpectedly upon this man, that he was about to show me his heart on fire. He would perhaps do it to you, Carl, but you will never come across him. He is a bookseller, but reads more books than he sells. It is evident that money is scarce here. But who knows ? perhaps this stranger, who tells me he is a rich man, will lift them out of their poverty. Perhaps he will fall in love with Hester. If I were he, and if I had never seen thy sister, Carl, I would woo this girl, and take her out into the fullest, brightest sunshine of fortune. She shall see him soon, and help me to nurse him ; and who can tell ?

"I had written so far when I made the acquaintance of another member of this strange household. I was building a castle for my hero in bed here, and my pale young heroine down-stairs, when I heard the door very warily turned upon its hinges, and a new face peered round it. My patient had fallen asleep, and I beckoned angrily to the intruder to go away. Instead of doing so, he entered on tip-toe, with his finger to his lips, and advanced into the middle of the room, steadfastly regarding the face of the sleeper. It was a small, shrunken man, wearing a linen apron and a brown paper cap. He glanced at me deprecatingly, but persisted in disregarding my gestures until I took him by the arm and led him to the door. He submitted meekly enough ; and as soon as we were in the passage outside, I whispered in a passion—

"'What brought you in there ?'

"'Do you know who he is ?' he asked, in a whisper also, but in a tone of horror which aroused my curiosity.

"'No !' I exclaimed.

"'He ought not to be in this house,' he continued energetically ; 'not in the same house as the master and Miss Hester, of all places in the world. He ought never to have been brought in here, and he must be taken away at once, or worse will come of it. Everybody would say the same.'

"'Tell me why,' I said.

"'Who are you ?' he asked.

"A stranger; my name is James Grant, and I am a surgeon by profession."

"He looked at me searchingly—it was like being scrutinised by a sparrow—and nodded."

"Come to my room," he said.

"My patient was sleeping quietly, and would probably sleep for an hour. I followed the little man through three or four black-looking rooms which had formerly served as printing offices, for there were some old presses still left, till we reached a large and light garret. Upon some shelves there were specimens of bookbinding which would have charmed your heart, and all other biblio-maniacs; but my new friend did not draw my attention to these. He gave me his stool to sit upon, and placed himself upon a heap of books. There was a chair in the window, but he did not offer it to me."

"Then, Carl, he unfolded to me a story. The man whom I found well-nigh murdered, is the only son of that David Waldron who is one of your greatest men, and a trustee of your college. Ten years ago, he, the son, ran away with the young wife of the man whose home he is now in, and the husband has never since lifted up his head or let a smile dawn upon his face. He is here, sheltered by the roof he has dishonoured, owing his life to the prompt humanity of the household he has wronged."

"My mind stopped there suddenly. Who, then, was the enemy that struck the blow—the deadly blow which nearly killed the man whom John Morley must needs hate? It seems that young Waldron only returned to his father's house a few months ago, on condition that he never set foot in the street where John Morley lives. What then brought him where I found him, at their very door? Whose hand but John Morley's own could have been lifted against him?"

"He must be taken away!" said the little man, trembling with excitement; "you must get him away at once. Suppose the master should see him again, and know him! or Miss Hester!" Just then we heard the rustle of a dress on the staircase, and a step so light that we could hardly hear it. The workman rose hurriedly and placed a gorgeous book in my hand. It was a marvel of curious binding, with gilding as fine as gossamer and as rich as lace."

"Yes," he said, as Hester glided softly into the attic, "it is very costly.—Ah, Miss Hester! this gentleman is looking at some of my old work.—But I can't do anything like this now, sir. My hand is not steady, and my eyesight is growing dull."

"I am learning this work myself," she said to me, with a faint smile; "but are you able to leave your charge? Is he so much better?"

"He is going on well," I answered; "so well that he will soon be able to tell us something

about himself. Your father and you must wish to know who he is."

"The workman looked at me over her shoulder, with an air of warning and entreaty."

"I wish to know," she said, "and so does Lawson here; but my father cares very little about anything. He inquires after him, as you know, every day, and that is all."

"I understood perfectly this absence of curiosity in John Morley."

"Do you know who he is yet?" she inquired.

"He has not been well enough for me to ask him any questions," I answered, "and he is quite a stranger to me. But I will ask him soon. He ought to communicate with his friends."

"It would be well," she replied, with that dignity which reminds me of Queen Esther; and then she unfolded a large apron and sleeves, and attired herself in them for her singular occupation. I remained a few minutes watching her. I took up mechanically a short but heavy iron bar, technically called a pin, with which the binder screws and unscrews his press. It crossed my mind that such as this might easily be the blunt instrument with which Waldron had been struck. I threw it down hastily and returned to my patient."

"He was lying awake, and looking more collected than he had done since his accident. His eyes were clear, his pulse steady, and his face, though colourless, perfectly calm. As well as he could, he was promenading his regards, as the French say, about the room. It is a pleasant, simply furnished chamber, with no ornament except the splendidly bound volumes I have already mentioned. He was in a mood for talk; and I told him at some length who I am, and how I came to be at Little Aston in the right nick of time for him."

"Do you see much of the people of the house?" he inquired.

"Not much," I answered; "they are poor, and we give no little trouble in the house. They keep only one servant, and Hester has to work hard herself, especially since we two have been here."

"Hester!" he repeated in a low tone; "is she a little girl, demure, but merry at times? I fancy I know something of her and her father. Have they seen me, either of them?"

"Yes," I said; "they have both seen you, and say you are a stranger to them. But Hester is not merry. Merry! she has not laughed these ten years, I should judge."

"He winced, and turned his head away uneasily."

"I want to see her," he said fretfully, and as if speaking to himself. "I must tell little Hetty who I am. I could tell it to her; some good might come of it. Besides, I must see her, I have thought of nothing else since I knew where I was. I must and will speak to Hester."

"He did not talk any more, but fell into a restless

sleep, muttering to himself that he must see Hester. I am watching beside him now. The night is come on and the house is as silent as a grave. I long to stamp heavily down the stairs, slam the doors, and whistle loudly; but the instant I set my feet out of this room, the gloom conquers me. I tread on tip-toe, and close the door as quietly as if some one lay a-dying somewhere. It has been a long dying here, Carl—a lingering death of ten

years; and it is a man's heart that has been slowly breaking. It would have been more merciful to kill him at once. I pity greatly John Morley.

"Good-bye, old fellow. Write me a sermon for my romance. We ought to go through life together, you and I—to you the souls, to me the bodies. Together we might heal many sicknesses.

"GRANT."

END OF CHAPTER THE TWENTY-SECOND.

"POOR JACK."

IN TWO PARTS.—PART THE SECOND.



ET provision be made—continues Mr. Plimsoll, in his propositions for correcting the abuses in the mercantile navy—for painting on each ship's side what the Newcastle Chamber of Commerce calls the "maximum load-line," and let

no ship, under any circumstances, be allowed to leave port unless that line be distinctly visible at or above the water-line. The Board of Trade should have a photograph of each vessel's side as she leaves the port or dock; it would not cost many shillings, and would save a great deal of false swearing.

As regards repairs, each vessel should be surveyed annually by a surveyor appointed by the Board of Trade.

No re-christening of a ship should ever be allowed under any circumstances, as by alteration of name one could easily get rid of an evil reputation, and so sailors might be led into signing articles for a voyage in a ship, when, had they known her real name, they would never have done so. It is not colliers alone that are habitually overloaded. Therefore compulsory survey, and prevention of overloading, should be applied to *all merchant ships*, and would result in the saving of all those lives which are lost from these causes in the rest of the merchant navy.

Now to show what can be done by the prevention of overloading, and how safe ships are when properly found, manned, and loaded, the following facts are mentioned:—

Mr. George Elliott, M.P., and his partners have a fleet of about a dozen steamers running between the Tyne and London continuously, each of these ships putting into London from fifty to seventy cargoes of coal per annum. They are loaded and unloaded by machinery, and go and come more than once each week, all being at least three-fourths of all the hours that come from year's end to year's end on the sea. The voyage is a more dangerous one than an over-sea voyage, as they have to pick their way through and amongst the most

dangerous sands and channels from the moment they leave the Thames. The wreck and other charts will show the nature of the navigation. All these have to be passed; but as there is no weather in these latitudes which is fairly responsible for the wreck of a single ship, except foggy weather, since no sound and well-found vessel, properly loaded and manned, is ever lost in them, these ships of the truly honourable member, George Elliott, go and come in such absolute safety that, during all the years from 1859 till now, not one of them has been lost, nor even met with a casualty worth naming.

This also is the case with the fleets of many other ship-owners, for nearly the whole of our loss is due to a comparatively small number of ship-owners; the large majority do take precautions for securing the safety of their servants' lives.

You have been shown what a "homicidal system" exists in our midst, and that it is our duty to endeavour to apply a remedy. If our sailors were as bad as bad can be, if their labour was of no use to any of us, that would surely be no reason for permitting such a system to continue; but they are not bad, they are as brave and manly fellows as any class ashore, and they have wives and families to deplore and suffer for their loss. Would that I possessed the eloquence of Bright, the graphic powers of Messrs. Erckmann and Chatrian, to use in their behalf, for then you would surely be wooed to action. If the lives of nearly a thousand of our ministers of religion, or doctors, or lawyers, or other public men were sacrificed every year to a "homicidal system," to pure and most culpable neglect, what would be said? All England would ring with indignation at the outrage, yet I venture to say that any thousand of the working classes are as worthy of respect and affection as any of these—if honesty, strong aversion to idleness, tenderness to wife and children, generosity to one another in adversity, and splendid courage are claims to respect. I am not sure that, taking them as a whole, you can find these moral qualities in equal degree in any other class.

Fellow-Christians, have you nothing to say to this? Do you think that there are no religious

sailors—no followers of our common Lord and Saviour amongst them? Oh, but you are greatly mistaken; there is more true religion amongst miners and sailors than you are aware of. I have been aboard a ship when the sailors were holding a service in the fore-castle—a single lamp swinging from the deck beam, and wild, rough weather without, making you hold on to a pillar to stand—and this was the order of it. They commenced by singing a hymn. Then the big, bluff captain, with the union jack for cover and a hogshead on end for a reading-desk, gave a short, earnest sermon from "Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me;" and then they concluded with the hymn—

"One there is, above all others,
Well deserves the name of friend."

And I well remember their singing the verse—

"Which of all our friends, to save us,
Could or would have shed his blood?"

and wondering how it was that these brave men were ~~so~~ entirely friendless—how it was that they alone of British subjects should have been abandoned to the tender mercies of unchecked irresponsibility—of competition run mad.

And I ask seriously and sadly, can any one doubt that if these brave men had been pigs or sheep, the legislature would have long since been compelled by powerful advocates to stop such losses?

Pigs and sheep are property, and property is well represented in Parliament; but these—why, they are only our poor brothers, and no one speaks for them.

LA BELLE JARDINIÈRE.



SINGING and thrilling like lark as,
high soaring,
He flings to the wide air his notes
sweet and clear,
On breeze gently wafted—by echo repeated—

Resounds the glad cry, Lo! the summer is near!

Not a bud swelling on fruit-tree or hedgcrow,
Not a wee flow'ret that opes with the day,
But mutely responds to the chorus of Nature,
And tricks itself brightly to welcome the May!

Out in her garden, from day-dawn till night-fall,
My own bonnie blossom flits gaily around;
Now o'er some flower that she loves fondly bending,
Now o'er some leaflet just peeped from the ground;

Now perched on tiptoe, to twine back the tendrils
That sport with her fingers, and slip from their clasp,
Or dance on the wind, or sweep lightly towards her,
To kiss her fair cheek, and her soft hair to grasp.

Queen of a realm where no rivals can vex her,
In the pride of her innocent girlhood she glows,
Her throne the green mound that the ash-tree o'er-shadows,
The fuchsias her jewels, her perfumes the rose.

Sometimes she sings as she flits through her queen-dom,
Mocking the cuckoo's monotonous lay;
Or watches the thrushes that nest in the thicket,
As blithesome and almost as busy as they.

Sometimes, more pensive, she dreams as she wanders

From pansy to iris, from lily to pink,
That bloom in full beauty to guerdon her tending,
Though nearer their fading perchance than we think.

Only a while and the summer is over,
Only a while and her flowers will be dead,
And the May of her young life be changing and sadd'ning,
And hope—if still cherished—be sorely bestead.

And love, human love, like some tender exotic,
Too often will shrink from the blight or the blast;
Or, if it still linger, grow selfish, exacting,
And not like the fair flower we reared in the past.

Then, from her eyes a few stray tear-drops dashing,
My wise little blossom will smile as of yore,
And read me a lesson she learned from her jasmine,
An old one perchance, though forgotten before.

Upward, still upward, first creeping, then climbing,
At all that can aid in their venture to cling—
Shaken by rude winds—beat down—yet still soaring
Skyward, the mute teachers rise with each spring!

Winter may nip them till, sapless and branchless,
Prone on the ground they neglected may lie,
Yet earth does but hold them till bright hours unfold them,
And again leaf and blossom soar up towards the sky.

Twine then the tendrils that teach such brave lessons,
Flower of my life! When thy fair youth is o'er,
Upward, still upward, may Love and Faith bear thee,
Where storm-cloud and winter can touch thee no more.

LOUISA CROW.



'THE DEWY ROSEBUD GIVEN AND TAKEN.'



AKIN TO LOVE.



“ON A FALLEN BEECHEN BOUGH.”

HAVE you met a maiden fair
Roaming through the forest shady?
“Many a maid I’ve met with there.”
“Nay, but none to match my lady.”

VOL. VII—NEW SERIES.

“If you be the lady’s love,
Show—for who could show me better—
By what signs I most may prove
If mine eyes have missed or met her.”

"Nay, I said not she loved me,
Howsoever much I love her,
Though none else may unto thee
Her by surer signs discover.

"Neath a golden wealth of hair
Laugh the blue eyes of my Phyllis;
Her red lips like roses rare,
Wreathed around a row of lilies.

"Glad is she in virgin white,
And she tripped across the valley,
Singing light, until my sight
Lost her in yon leafy alley."

"Such a maid methinks I met
Underneath the forest shady—
Such a maid methinks—and yet
Scarcely all in all thy lady."

"Now, what mean you, I implore?"
"Said you not your Phyllis pretty
Fled along the flowery floor,
Trolling out some mirthful ditty?"

"But the maid I met but now
Leant, with lips for grief a-quiver,
On a fallen beechen bough,
O'er the margin of the river;

"Her soft arms most sadly laid
O'er that branch that bridged the river;
Graven on whose rind I read;
'If lovers never, friends for ever.'"

"Nay then, so your tale be truth,
With the dearest joy you move me;
If her scorn be turned to ruth,
Phyllis at the last may love me."

ALFRED PERCEVAL GRAVES.

A BRAZILIAN PRISON.

IN TWO PARTS.—PART THE FIRST.

THE PRISON.



HE "Romance of the Prison" is beginning to be exploded at last; and it is sufficiently strange that it should have lasted so long. To the mere sentimentalist, there is what he would call "a lamentable want of the romantic" about the modern prison.

State dungeons, indeed, may acquire a gloomy grandeur from the very deeds which pollute them. The ancient towers of Berkeley and Pontefract were dignified by the associations of a terrible tragedy.

The tremendous historical significance of the crimes which stained the Tower of London and the Citadel of St. Petersburg, has preserved both from the contempt, while consigning them to the abhorrence of posterity. Through the whole history of the Bastille runs a Titanic intensity of terror, a colossal power of agony and despair, which, by its very vastness, extorts a strange and terrified admiration.

But when we turn from the criminals of history to those of common life, we find that in spite of Bar and Press, sensational novelists and fierce "friends of humanity," every attempt to invest them with a romantic interest fails lamentably. In all civilised countries, crime is being rapidly stripped of its greatest attraction—the element of impenetrable mystery. The searching and rigorous investigations of nineteenth-century justice have broken into the deeper mysteries of great cities, and brought to light, like a torch lowered into a

charnel-vault, rank after rank of hideous objects hitherto unseen and unknown: tomb-like streets, into which men have wandered, and never come back; black, sluggish canals, hiding the tell-tale secret of midnight murder; noisome dens, grimy with filth and savage in decay, where skulking ruffians carouse over their booty; men without manly courage, women without womanly feeling, children without childlike innocence—the dry bones of crime in all its hideous rottenness, unclothed with the flesh of romance, and unvivified by the breath of sentimentalism. Such details, however, revolting as they are, serve at least one good purpose—that of painting vice in its true colours.

In these days of worshipped immorality and deified crime, when much of the literature of Europe has transformed itself into a kind of "Crime for the Young," or "Murder made Easy," it is no light benefit to society to have rogues and villains depicted as they are, and as they will be in the eyes of all, when the gloss of novelty shall have worn off.

For, happily, even the attraction of guilt cannot last for ever. Tomàs and Cartouche, Dick Turpin and Jerry Abershaw have long since been taken down from the glorified gibbet whereon they were pecked to pieces by ravenous penny-novelists and sensational play-writers; and even the once famous Jack Sheppard retains but a shadow of his former immortality:

"He left the name at which the town grew pale
To point a novel, or adorn a gaol."

Somewhat after this fashion do I find myself moralising while on my way, one bright, clear

afternoon, along the spacious high-road that leads out of Rio de Janeiro towards its favourite mountain retreat of Tijuca.

It is the end of May, and consequently almost the middle of the cold season in this contradictory region, where the depth of winter falls in June, and the height of summer in December; but there is nothing wintry or desolate in the glorious panorama that environs me on every side.

Broad sweeps of upland, clothed with rich tropical vegetation; tall iron railings, around which twine lovingly the huge bell-like convolvulus and the flaming crimson of the poncetta; trim little white-balconied villas, peeping here and there from the dark glossy green of their encircling orange-groves; tall slender palms-royal, slim and graceful as an Arab sheikh, the born patricians of the forest; quaint little shops, like magnified rat-traps, with a keen, well-whiskered tenant peering out of each; throngs of gaily-dressed promenaders of every varied complexion, from the soft, buttered-toast mezzotinto of the quadroon to the boot-like shininess of the genuine "nigger;" the smart white cars of the Street Railway Company,* with their painted fronts and sleek-coated mules, jingling over the long, even lines of rail, which are still the wonder and admiration of the Great Unwashed of Rio; and in the background a vast ring of purple mountains, rising starkly up thousands of feet against the lustrous sky, conspicuous among which stand the spear-pointed crest of Pedro Bonito,† and the mighty ridge of the Corcovado.‡

Such a day seems just intended for merry-making, as the crowds of pleasure-seekers who go laughing and chattering by me appear to think; and it is not without a certain feeling of incongruity and bad taste that I at length halt in front of a tall, neat-looking building, surrounded by a high wall, and looking not unlike a private school with an unusually large playground. A private school indeed it is—one of a very peculiar character. In this enlightened age, even crime and punishment are made subjects of improvement, and carried out in a neat, businesslike, refined manner, worthy of nineteenth-century civilisation.

Prison cells are neatly furnished, and kept scrupulously clean; murders are committed, not with the clumsy, antiquated appliances of brick and bludgeon, but with the newest resources of chemical science; the public hangman is a quiet, respectable, mild-looking, elderly gentleman, who might pass for a doctor or a City missionary; and the model prison before which I am standing

wears on its prim, well-regulated exterior no trace of the grim elements which are smouldering within.

But once inside, the real character of the place instantly asserts itself.

The porter (a tall, powerful negro, in spotless white tunic and broad-leaved hat) receives me with perfect civility, and volunteers to show me to the Governor's quarters; but there is a volume of meaning in the keen, wary, suspicious look which he darts at me as I enter—such a look as one sees only in the eyes of those to whom peril is the atmosphere of their daily life—the tamer of wild beasts, the keeper of furious maniacs, the gaoler of dangerous criminals.

Before me, white and bare and deserted, the huge courtyard lies outstretched in the blistering sunshine—not a sign of life in any part of it, except the solitary sentinel planted at the far end; and this air of utter loneliness, and silent, deadly precaution, strikes me as with a sudden chill.

A single stone wall between us and the outer world—but what a difference it makes!

"And here the free, glad sea-breeze,
And there the laboured breath;
On this side life and passion,
On that side gloom and death."

But there is no time to moralise, for in another moment I find myself in a clean, well-kept ante-room, where a liveried servant, with that air of quiet vigilance which seems to stamp every inmate of this strange place as with a distinctive mark, steps forward to receive me.

I produce my credentials (a letter of introduction from the ex-Minister of Justice and most formidable political writer in Brazil, Senhor de Alencar, to whose kindness I owe much valuable information), and, a few moments later, am ushered into a small, neatly furnished cabinet. Here, behind a table strewn with papers, sits "O Senhor Governador do Prisão" himself—a tall, grave-looking man, whose high bald forehead and iron jaw show that he lacks neither brain nor resolution for the full discharge of his duty—who rises and greets me with elaborate Brazilian courtesy.

"Senhor de Alencar tells me," says he, with a low bow, "that the English ~~senhor~~ has already visited many European prisons. I am myself collecting information on that subject at the present moment, and shall be deeply grateful for any facts with which your Honour may be pleased to furnish me."

"What little information I possess is most heartily at your Excellency's service," answer I, bowing in return, and producing from my pocket-book a newspaper extract containing some notes on the Litovski Prison at St. Petersburg, which I visited three years ago.

"Ten thousand thanks," says his Excellency, stowing away the precious document in a small

* Street railways are rapidly becoming universal in Brazil. They have existed in the great seaports for several years; and in Rio alone the number of cars starting daily from the central dépôt, San Francisco de Paula, is estimated at 530.

† The Hunchback—so-called from its shape. "Pedro Bonito" means Handsome Peter.

writing-case. "And now, if you will permit me to do myself the pleasure of accompanying your Honour across the courtyard, I will give orders to the head turnkey to conduct you through every part of the establishment, and to answer any questions which you may wish to ask."

I content myself with another low bow (for, in a race of compliments, no man living has a chance with the genuine Brazilian) and follow my obliging cicerone across the court to a deep, tunnel-like gateway, which admits us to the inner yard. This second enclosure, smaller, shadier, and planted with trees along either side, contrasts pleasantly with the gaunt nakedness of its predecessor. I venture to remark this to my companion.

"Yes," he answers, "the prisoners are allowed to walk here during their hours of relaxation, and it's just as well to keep it tidy for them, and give them something pretty to look at. Nothing makes a man worse (as I dare say your Honour has discovered before now) than unbroken monotony in his surroundings. Now, here we are at the storehouse, and I'll show you what sort of food our lodgers get."

The storekeeper salutes us as we pass in, and comes briskly forward to exhibit his provisions, which are all very wholesome and well-kept; but, unluckily for me, his Excellency's zeal for my enlightenment upon every detail of the new system does not rest satisfied with merely showing me the bill of fare, but insists upon making me taste it likewise.

Very much against my will, I am dosed with an abnormal mixture of white bread, brown sugar, raw coffee, dried fish, uncooked beans, and fat

bacon, such as might appal the stoutest mulcteer who ever digested a "guisada." At last, with the fear of dyspepsia, dysentery, slow poisoning, and other horrors before my eyes, I attempt a diversion.

"Can your Excellency oblige me with the number of prisoners at present under your charge, and their hours of rest, food, and relaxation? I'm always interested in such matters."

"With great pleasure, senhor;" and his Excellency produces pencil and paper, and dashes off, in his rapid businesslike way, the required list, which lies before me as I write, soiled and crumpled with months of travel, but still legible as ever.

NUMBER OF INMATES.—

Trabalho (hard labour)	159
Galés (convicts)	75
Simples (simple imprisonment)	14
Total	248

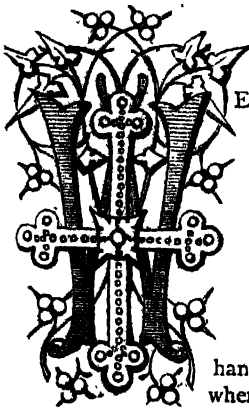
DIVISION OF TIME:—

Time of rising	6 a.m.
Relaxation	6 to 8 a.m.
Breakfast (coffee and 9 oz. of white bread per man)	8 a.m.
Work of various kinds	8.30 to 12 noon.
Dinner (meat with vegetables) and open-air exercise	12 to 2 p.m.
Work	2 to 5.30 p.m.
Tea and relaxation	5.30 to 6 p.m.
Lights put out	8 p.m.

This done, his Excellency takes a courteous leave of me, handing me over to the care of the head turnkey, a plump, round-faced, merry little Brazilian, who marches me off as triumphantly as if I were a criminal of the deepest dye.

I pull out my note-book, and commence my tour of inspection in good earnest.

END OF PART THE FIRST.



MEN WHO FACE DEATH.—THE FIREMAN.

ELL, there's no mistake about it, ours is a dangerous calling, though not quite so dangerous perhaps as a many think. There's some people as have an idea that we're a regular lot of fire-eaters—salamanders, as they call 'em. They picture us always a-rushing through flames, hanging on by the eyelids somewhere, with a woman over one shoulder and a couple of children over the other. But, lor bless you, that's the sort of thing as you only see on the stage, or read about just at the "to be continued in our next" part of a story, where a feller is left in a blazing room, or hanging from a third-floor window-sill for a week. We'll risk our lives freely enough, and do risk 'em many a time;

but for all that we don't quite go in for the fire-eating business. If we did you'd only hear of more firemen lost, and fewer other people saved.

Of course, it does happen that after you are in a house that is on fire, flames burst out somewhere so as to bar your passage out, and then seeing that you are in for it, you know that there is nothing for it but a rush through, and you act according. You lowers yer head so as to make yer helmet act as a sort of cutter, and catch as much of the blaze as possible, and then drawing yer breath and clinching yer teeth, and with all sorts of thoughts flashing through your mind, you make the dash. But no fireman would go into a room that was already in flames. Under ordinary circumstances there would be no need for him to do so. If there were people in the room, and they had got to the window, they could be got out with the escape; while if they hadn't got to the window, it would be fifty chances

to one against their being alive. The smoke would most likely have done its work on them before the flames broke out. So far as human life is concerned, smoke is more fatal than fire; and it is, perhaps, well that it is, for suffocation is a more merciful death than burning would be. I've had one or two pretty bad burns, and once I was in the smoke till I dropped insensible, so that I know what I'm talking about.

What caused me to stay in the smoke so long? Well, I'll tell you: the only one thing that could have made me stay—to save life. It was at my first fire. I had been in the brigade some months, and knew my duties as far as instruction and drill could teach me, but till this night I had never been at an actual fire.

Well, just before twelve o'clock, and while I was on duty, they telegraphed to us from the next station—you know each station is generally in direct telegraphic communication with three or four others—that there was a fire at a big draper's up their way. I gave the alarm, and in less than a minute my mates were out and buckling-to, and in less than five minutes we were dashing along the road, giving mouth to our "Clear the way!" When we got to the place there were two other engines at work, and a great crowd cheering and shouting.

Well, I was a strong, healthy young fellow, and had joined the brigade as much from a liking to the work as anything, seeing there was a dozen other things I could have earned the same money at; for three-and-sixpence a day, which is what you are started at, isn't killing pay. However, that is neither here nor there; the bustle of getting to the fire, and the still greater bustle that was going on at it, stirred my blood, and made me feel ready for anything. For that once I did feel in a fire-eating frame of mind; I wanted a chance to do a bit of real work, and before I had been on the ground a couple of minutes I got it.

A man from one of the other stations was brought down the escape regularly dead beat, and could just gasp out that he believed two of the shop-girls were still in the room that he had just come out of, beaten back by the heat and smoke. That was enough for me; I dips my pocket-handkerchief in water, sticks it in my belt so as to be handy, mounts the ladder, and creeps into the room. I threw myself flat, and though it was dreadfully hot, I managed to keep pretty well under the smoke. Opening my eyes just for an instant, I caught a sort of glimmer of something white, and wriggling myself to it, I found it was one of the girls, who was, of course, quite insensible. I got a good hold of her, and then taking a suck at my handkerchief, made my way back, and put her into the escape. I stepped out for a second or two just to get breath, and then in I went again to try for the other poor

girl. I worked myself across the room without feeling anything, and then, the heat having got unbearable, began to make my way back as fast as I could, and had got nearly to the window when I put my hand on the girl. I gripped her,* but found that by this time I was too weak to work her along lying down, as I had done the other, so hoping I might be able to stagger over the few feet to the window, I rose to my feet; but the sulphury smoke floored me in an instant, I dropped senseless with her in my arms, and knew no more till I found myself coming-to in the open air.

How had I been saved? Well, in this way. Fastened to the top of the escape is a life-line, which we take in our hand when we go in among the smoke, so that we may guide ourselves back by it. I had stuck hard to this, and when I went down had given it such a jerk, that the man who was on the escape watching for me guessed pretty well how things had gone, and hauling in steadily brought us both into sight, and then making a dash at us, managed to get us into the escape just in the nick of time, for the flames burst through ceiling-high as he was clearing the window.

No, that wasn't what I had my medal given to me for. It was an affair of something the same sort though. There was two women in the house that time; but a fire-escape conductor had got one of them out, and had made three attempts to save the other, before I got up. When I did get on the ground he told me how things stood, and so I put a ladder up to the window, went into the room and found her, and handed her out to him. He had had the brunt of the work, but lookers-on thought it was a case of well done both, and wrote to the Royal Society for the Protection of Life from Fire, about us, and the society rewarded us both.

Oh, it's only as I don't want to brag, and set us all up as so many fire-eaters. There's no doubt about it that firemen do plucky things, and without making any fuss about it. I dare say there's scarcely a day or night passes in which some fireman doesn't risk his life and have a narrow squeak for it. I've seen some tremendous close shaves, and I've had one or two myself in my time. In fact, I often wonder that more firemen aren't killed; the song says as there's a sweet little cherub that sits up aloft to look after the life of poor Jack; and I sometimes thinks to myself as the same might be said of firemen, as well as sailors. I don't suppose there's one of us, as has seen much service, that hasn't had as narrow escapes for his life as it's possible for a man to have; and though we come home safe time after time, we never go out without having the thought that it may be for the last time.

But though we have our risks, though our business is, as you may say, all risk when we are actually at a fire, we have our advantages too. We have plenty

of good tackle, and know how to use it; we get to know lots of little wrinkles that help us; and with practice we learn to be cool, and that's a great thing. If us professionals didn't keep our heads it would be a bad job, for most other people lose their heads at a fire, and no wonder either, for when you think of it, it must be an awful thing to wake in the night and find yourself in a burning house.

Well, yes, people in their fright do sometimes make the work of saving them more difficult than it would be otherwise. Best half of those you get out from a fire are senseless from the smoke, and of course it's easy enough to manage them, poor things; but when they have got to a window or are in a cut-off room, where they can still breathe, it's a different case. If you don't watch it they'll spring on you before you're ready for them, and more than once I have nearly been thrown from the ladder in that way. Then sometimes they'll get in each other's way, each anxious to be saved first, and at others you'll find a customer hanging back because they want you to save a cash-box or something of that sort as well as themselves. However, we generally manage to save all that we can reach, and as since poor Ford's death all the escapes have been wire-gauzed, that makes one danger the less in escape work.

Our greatest dangers? Well, the smoke as I tell you is one of them, and the other is the falling of buildings or part of 'em. That is the greatest danger of all, the one that most accidents happen through, and that is the hardest to guard against. I should say that ten people were killed or hurt by the fall of buildings, for one by fire. I remember seeing a comrade of mine standing on an iron beam, that looked as firm a standing-place as the ground itself, when in an instant, and without so much as a crack or a shake to give him warning, the wall that the beam was built into gave way, and beam and man went crashing together two storcy's down, and we saw no more of him till hours afterwards, when we got his body out, burnt to a cinder.

Just a little while back, again, I was at work in a flour mill that had been burnt out. The floors were fireproof ones, and the building was reckoned uncommonly strong, and certainly looked it. Well, another man and I were working on one of the floors, when the hand that was carrying round the refreshments came and asked us if we wanted anything. We both said no, and he turned away, but before he had gone many feet I altered my mind, and thought I would just take a drop of something to drink—for working in a fired building is a hot berth, let me tell you, even after the fire has been put out—so I stepped after him, and he was just filling me out a glass of beer, when there came a crash like a clap of thunder just behind me, and turning round, I saw—as soon as the dust cleared

away a bit—that the building had fallen in just where I had been standing not a minute before.

The other man lay buried in the ruins, stone dead, as I would have been if I hadn't by the merest chance happened to move. My heart went cold as I saw what a narrow escape I had had. I thought how true it was what the Scripture says, "One shall be taken, and the other left." That's always the text I think of when I see a thing of that sort. I might have stepped into the danger just as I stepped out of it. Such things look all chance, but we are all in the Master's hands, to be taken or left as he may see fit. It's a thought often gives me heart when I'm about anything that looks particularly dangerous.

Speaking, though, about gutted buildings falling in, and things of that sort, you should bear in mind that there is many a man gets hurt in that way, crippled for life perhaps, though he may not be killed on the spot. There is often such odds and ends as bricks, coping stones, and lumps of wood flying about, and you can't always steer clear of them, though your helmet does a good deal for you; mine has saved me from many a broken head, if not from worse. Then, you know, getting a lot of smoke and sulphur into your lungs don't help your health any, and no more does getting drenched with water, and half roasted going into fire-heated rooms; and, taking it altogether, you may safely set down a fireman's life as being a very wearing-out one, as well as dangerous.

It's our duty to risk our lives, we're paid to do it, but where saving the lives of others is concerned we risk them full and free, and for pity's sake, and manhood's sake, as well as duty's sake. I've never seen a fireman shrink from doing anything that a man could be fairly expected to do. Not as I mean to say, mind you, that they are the only ones that would risk their lives to save a fellow-creature from fire. I've seen policemen, and working men, and gentlemen save life as bravely as it could be saved, and carrying their own lives in their hands to do it. Ay! and I've seen women do it too, especially mothers. I once saw a mother get her child out of a room, after two firemen that had tried it on had been beaten back and given it over for a bad job. She got severely scorched over it, it's true, but she got the child out unharmed, and was all right again herself at the end of a few weeks.

Not long in getting to a fire? Well, not a second longer than can possibly be helped, of course. Sharp's always the word and the deed too with us, for in our business time's money and it may be life. You see we either live in the station or within call of it, and we musn't move a yard away without saying where we are going, so that all hands are always within reach. I've known the start to be made in two minutes and a half from

the time of our getting the message, and we are never over four minutes in getting out, while everybody knows the pace we go at when we are once on the road.

Incendiary fires? Well, I hardly know what to say about them, or in fact hardly what to think. There's some of the insurance people as make no bones about saying that a good half of the fires are caused on purpose, and there's a good many of our men as thinks the same, and I've certainly seen some very suspicious cases myself, though I couldn't have proved anything wrong. I remember one fire that I was at, was the third the same man had had in a few years. In this one, two of his children were burnt to death, and over each of the fires there was whispering and head-shaking among those who knew him, and talk about some people appearing to be better off after a fire, and all that sort of thing.

At any rate he went mad after this last fire, though of course he might easily have done that after what had happened, whether he had had a hand in it or not.

There's no doubt that some fires are started on purpose and to make money by, and it's a dreadful thing to think that there are people bad enough to do such an act.

There is no knowing where a fire may end when it has once started, nor whose life it may cut short. Setting a house on fire ain't a hanging matter according to law, but sometimes when I've noticed something queer about a fire, I've thought to myself that it ought to be. There can be no moral doubt that innocent people have perished by incendiary fires, and I dare say more than one good man of our brigade has lost the number of his mess in them.

However, it's all in the day's work with us; we take our fires as they come, asking no questions; and if your time is come, why, I don't know that you can make a much better ending than in trying to save the lives of others. It's our calling to face death, and we do it, trusting to a greater than ourselves to guard us. As the motto of the Protection and Reward Society says, "Actions are ours, results are God's."

HESTER MORLEY'S PROMISE.

BY HESBA STRETTON,

AUTHOR OF "THE DOCTOR'S DILEMMA," ETC. ETC.

CHAPTER THE TWENTY-THIRD.

HIS ONLY ENEMY.

WHILE Robert Waldron had been lying in a state of stupefaction bordering upon delirium, he had possessed a dull but constant realisation of the fact that he was in John Morley's house. There was, it is strange to say, a species of satisfaction to him in this. The place which he had been forbidden to approach had become a shelter to him, and had received him into its most intimate recesses. He could hear, night and morning, John Morley's footsteps upon the stairs; and he listened with a thrill of interest, and a momentary triumph that he could hear it. The soft sweet voice at his door was the voice of the little Hester, whom he had loved with the delicate and chivalrous fondness which young men sometimes feel for children just entering upon girlhood. There was a vague, weak gratification in knowing that he was with them, in the house where he had come and gone as a familiar friend in the days long gone by. In his stupor, he was not sure that time was quite past, or that Rose herself might not come to his side and lay her cool hands upon his burning head. The past and present mingled curiously in his mind; and, upon the whole, his feeling was one of contentment in being where he was.

But when that lethargy was ended, his memories and fears awoke strongly within him. It was impossible to drive away the suspicion, soon ripening into conviction, that it was John Morley's own hand which had so nearly deprived him of life. He had no other enemy; there was no other fellow-creature to whom he owed such a debt, which only revenge could pay. He did not blame his assailant: he rather owned that it was no more than he deserved. But if this were true, then John Morley knew him to be lying helpless, and within his power. He was in the hands of a deadly and stealthy foe, with no protector but this stranger who had chanced to find him bleeding to death in the street. He began to be suspicious of the succour given to him.

What could it all mean? Was it an artifice to avert suspicion? Or did John Morley wish to keep him yet within reach of a subtle vengeance? The more he pondered over his position, the more bewildered and disquieted he became.

In his perplexity, he at last came to the resolution to see Hester, and trust himself to her; and for that reason he endeavoured to gain and preserve the calm which Grant assured him was essential to his speedy recovery. There were three wills at work in the house: Robert Waldron had resolved to see Hester, and speak with her; Grant was

decided that it would be best and wisest to get him away from the place without letting her know who had been their guest ; while Hester herself, in the newly awakened stimulus of curiosity, was bent upon discovering all she could concerning their strange inmate.

At last the day came when Grant announced to Robert Waldron that he was well enough to spend an hour or two in another apartment. He shuddered at the idea of entering once again the room where he had spent so many hours with Rose. But Grant was not the man to whom he could confide his story with its episode of guilt. And had he not longed to see the place again ? Had he not thought it might be part of the penance which in some measure, by its sharp pang, would atone for his sin ? He strung up his nerves, bade his heart be strong, and leaning tremblingly upon Grant's shoulder, left the chamber where he had been lying, half unconscious, on the edge of the grave.

The room to which he was conducted was scarcely larger than a closet, and contained only a very small table and two chairs—one of them the large antique chair, with high back and sides, which had been bought years ago for Hester's mother, and which had never since been moved from its station on John Morley's hearth. He sank into it exhausted. It was not until Grant had left him, asleep as he supposed, that he opened his eyes again, and gazed about him anxiously. His seat was set opposite to a small window, the view from which was dismal : an outer staircase, black with smoke and decay, leading up to a discoloured door, about which clustered some dingy ivy-leaves. This closed door, and the mournful ~~look~~ ^{look} about it, fascinated him. It seemed to fill the little casement ; for, without going closer to it, nothing could be seen but this one gable, with its blackened and worn-out steps leading to it. He could see by the rust upon the handle, and by the overgrowth of sickly tendrils stretching across the doorway, that it was a place fallen into disuse—a mere lumber-room shut up for long months together, and left to the dust and mildew ; yet none the less did his mind, weakened and dizzy, imagine that there lurked in it some scene which it was necessary for him to see, and which would all lie before him, plain and intelligible and full of interest, if only the rotten panels of the door would give way. Somewhere outside the sun was shining, and in the grate a cheerful fire was crackling ; but, in spite of the light and warmth, he shivered as one shivers sometimes at a ghastly thought in the depth of a winter's night. Day and night John Morley's house was a haunted house for him.

Robert Waldron started with nervous and guilty dread, as the latch of the door clicked softly before it was pushed quietly open. He turned his eyes, large and sunken with his illness, upon the doorway,

wondering who might be about to enter ; for it was never with this slow caution that Grant came in. A girl's face looked in for a moment before advancing—a fair, grave face, with a colour upon it, soft and clear and delicate, and a light in the large grey eyes, like the shining of the spring sun behind a thin veil of mist. This surely could not be Hester, the little child whom he had been wont to nurse upon his knee, and to whom he had read fairy stories. Yet it could be no one else. He felt the sudden sting of hot tears under his eyelids. It was Hester—little Hetty—whose whole life he had clouded and saddened. He attempted to rise from his chair, but he found himself powerless and speechless. It was with an almost superhuman effort that he restrained himself from breaking out into loud and bitter weeping.

"I am Hester Morley," she said, advancing towards him, and speaking in a low and measured voice, which was somewhat monotonous in its accents, yet all the more soothing to him. "Mr. Grant told me you were going to sit here for an hour or two. Can I do anything for you ? Shall I fetch you anything ?"

"Stay with me a little while," he answered, stammering and hesitating ; "I have something to tell you."

"Do you feel strong enough yet ?" she asked, looking at him with an expression of grave anxiety. "Mr. Grant does not know I am come, or he would not let me be here ; but I wish to tell you that you are among friends, and you need not hurry yourself to go away. We are your friends, though we are strangers to each other yet. It would not be possible to watch over any one, and think about them night and day, and pray to God for their recovery, without feeling that they are friends. I want you to feel this too."

The words were spoken softly, with that faint languor of a voice which had never been quickened by either mirth or passion ; but they smote upon Robert Waldron with the keenest tone of reproach. He looked up speechlessly into her face ; and her clear eyes, from whose grave scrutiny he shrank, looked down pitifully upon his agitation.

"Nay," she said, "I must leave you if you will excite yourself. I told you Mr. Grant does not know I am at home, and I think he would be displeased if he found me here. So you must be calm, and prove that I do you good and not harm, and then he will let me come again. My father is John Morley, the bookseller. Do you know us ? He thinks of coming to see you this evening. Do you know him at all ?"

"I used to know him a little," answered Robert Waldron.

"Every one knows my father," said Hester, with a sad smile ; "so you see you are not among strangers, and you may feel quite at home in our

house. I do not know many people, for I have never been out of Little Aston, and it is no wonder that you are a stranger to me ; yet I do not feel as if you were really a stranger. I suppose it is because I was afraid you were going to die here ; and nobody has died in this house since my mother, nearly nineteen years ago."

She stood within reach of his hand, if he had dared to touch her with it : a subdued and quiet girl, as if she had grown up in the shadow of her mother's death ; but he knew well that was not the

throbbing of his heart. She was about to call Grant, when he stretched out his hands to her.

"I am very ill," he muttered ; "hold my hand in yours for a moment."

Hester took it between both her own and held it in a firm warm clasp, waiting for this paroxysm of weakness to pass before she hastened away. The tears which had been burning under his eyelids fell in torrents ; and at length Robert Waldron bent down his fevered head, and rested it upon her hand.



"YOU HAVE NOT FORGIVEN ME"

chill and the darkness which had fallen upon her life.

"Your father married a second time?" he said, almost in spite of himself, and shuddering at the answer he had invoked.

"You know it," she said, "if you know my father."

"I have not seen him," he answered, laying his hand upon his heart, "these ten years."

"You would not know him again then," said Hester mournfully ; "he is an old man now, broken down and infirm. Are you sure you never heard of our trouble ? Everybody knew it."

He did not answer ; but Hester, in the dead silence which followed, could hear the heavy

"Don't you know who I am, Hester?" he murmured.

A slight shiver ran through Hester's frame. There was something in his tone now which startled her memory, and she tried to free her hands from those which held them ; but he was grasping them too tightly for her to disengage herself.

"Hetty !" he cried—and no one had ever called her by that name since Rose had fled—"little Hetty, have pity upon me ; I am very wretched !"

The first passionate moment in Hester's life had come. She thrust back the bruised head, and wrested herself from the grasp which held her, falling back from him as one who was an abhorrence to her. He had been the curse of her

father's house ; and through the long solitary years to which he had doomed her, his sin and her step-mother's had haunted her. And now he was within the very recesses of their home again—more than a guest now—an inmate, thought of, tended, and cared for. The pallor had passed away from her face and the soft lustré from her eyes ; and when she spoke, her voice had the eager and vehement ring of passion.

"Oh!" she cried, "is it possible that you could be near dying, and yet not die, in this house? Many a man would have died here of grief and shame alone. How can you breathe the air my father breathes? How can you eat his bread and not be choked by it? Is it possible that any man can be so mean a thing, so miserable a thing?"

"Hester," moaned Robert Waldron, "I am the most miserable of men!"

He lifted up to her his wan emaciated face, covered with grief and remorse. For the present he was stripped of all the self-sufficiency and pleasant palliation of his own faults, which in easier moments characterised Robert Waldron. Hester felt herself smitten with pity and compassion for him. If he had repented thus, he must have well-nigh borne the full penalty of his crime during the ten years which had passed so painfully over her father's head.

"My father must never know whom he has sheltered," she said in a softer voice; "you must leave us as soon as you can, and with all the secrecy possible. No one must know you have ever been in this house, lest it should reach his ears. I believe it would kill him. Rouse yourself and think what we can do to prevent him discovering it."

"Hester!" he cried, "say something pitiful to me."

"Oh, I pity you!" she answered; "I pity you all—her and you and my father; but what can I do? There are troubles which no one can lighten. They say that time will soften every sorrow, but it has not done anything for you or my father, or for her."

For an instant Robert remembered how dim the past had grown for him.

"Forgive me, little Hetty," he said.

"I forgive you," she replied, touching with the tips of her fingers his hand which lay upon the table; "for you did not know what you were doing. Look at me; how different I should have been if I had grown up by the side of a mother who loved me! You cannot see my father or her; but me you can see, so different to what I might have been but for you."

He looked at her, standing before him with her pure young face, austere and grave, yet possessing a charm which made his heart throb again rapidly. Looking at her did not bring to his mind the evil

he had committed; but he did not dare to put into words any of the thoughts which thronged his brain, and he kept a sombre silence.

"When can you go away?" asked Hester, after a pause.

"Not to-day," he said imploringly, "do not send me away to-day, Hester."

"You shall stay," she answered, in the old soft languid voice, "until you can go safely. But my father must not see you. Tell Mr. Grant enough to let him know why you must make haste to go, and he will arrange how you can be removed, so that no one may find out that you have been here."

A half-smile crossed his face, which he had shaded with his hand, as he thought how well John Morley knew who he was, and how it was that he had been struggling against death these last few days. But he could not breathe a word of this to Hester; he did not know what he dared to say to her now she knew him. He longed to hear her voice again, and lift his eyes to her sweet though reproving face. When he did look up, feeling the silence too painful, he found himself again alone, for Hester had stolen away noiselessly; and his heavy and weary eyes fastened once more upon the dismal doorway opposite to him, with its smoky wreath of ivy.

CHAPTER THE TWENTY-FOURTH.

ON THE BRINK.

HESTER had to pay her price for the gratification of her curiosity. Grant had, as he supposed, made sure that she was safely out of the way before he had left his charge, to take the sleep he so greatly needed; and she had availed herself of his absence to visit the stranger, about whom her mind had been busy with a thousand painful conjectures. It had been a romance to her, but now the romance had suddenly assumed the severe and hard aspect of a reality. That which, to more distant onlookers, added to the romance, brought it for her into the practical region of an unpleasant fact. Robert Waldron, whose name was never uttered in her father's hearing, was here, separated from him only by thin walls, and a door whose latch could be lifted with a touch.

Hester believed in the implacable resentment of her father. He had forsaken many of the established forms of religion, had withdrawn from all prominent offices in the church, had even given up the practice of assembling his little household for private worship, and never took into his lips the name of the God he had once professed to serve. These were signs of such tremendous import in the judgment of his minister, and of Miss Waldron especially, that it was no wonder Hester's mind was troubled by them, or that she attributed them, as they did, to an unrelenting hatred to those who had destroyed the honour and happiness of his existence. Secretly, though troubled, Hester had rather gloried in her

father's implacability, as being in accord with the high-flown romances and poems with which her imagination had fed itself. But of late she had longed for some ray of tender light, some flash of possible relenting, to break in upon the gloom of his spirit; and now that Robert Waldron was positively in their dwelling, she was frightened. What would her father feel? What would he do? Into what might he be hurried if he came face to face with their unknown guest, and found in him the man whom he hated, his enemy and betrayer?

She went slowly down-stairs, deliberating within herself, until she reached her father's sitting-room. He glanced up at her entrance, with a gleam of light upon his grey face which was his nearest approach to a smile, for neither lips nor eyebrows were unbended. She went forward with an involuntary movement, as if she would take his white head into her arms and kiss the furrowed face which had so sorrowful a story graven upon it; but caresses were rarely exchanged between them, and Hester checked her impulse. The hearth looked empty without the great chair which had kept its place there these twenty years—her own mother's chair; and Hester's face burned as she thought of Robert Waldron resting in it in her little study up-stairs.

"Ah!" said John Morley, looking towards the empty place, "I miss it, Hester. Is our poor guest up yet? Have you seen him?"

"Yes," answered Hester briefly.

"I will visit him myself as soon as I am at liberty," he continued; "has he made known to you his name and family?"

Hester started, and hesitated. At all risks she must keep this terrible secret from him; and yet she was not practised in dissimulation, and was not ready with a reply. Fortunately he was habitually indifferent to any subject of conversation.

"I did not ask him," she stammered; "I was afraid of exciting him. Indeed, I know Mr. Grant did not wish me to see him at all; but I thought it would do no harm. You had better not see him at present, father; he is still very ill. Hark! There is Mr. Grant."

It was Mr. Grant, descending the staircase as noisily as possible. He approached the door and gave three sharp distinct raps upon it, which was answered by Hester opening it as quietly as usual.

He looked in with a frank hearty smile, and spoke in one of those voices, full of life and spirits, which sound so cheerfully in chambers of gloom and sickness.

"Come, Mr. Morley," he said, "I am a medical man, and I will give you a prescription gratis. You ought to take a walk of two hours every day in this lovely country. I am going for a run now. Come with me, sir."

"And who will attend to my business?" asked John Morley, with a second gleam upon his face.

"Your business is to be well," persisted Grant; "and how can you be well, sitting here all day long, brooding and moody, till you are capable of committing any crime in the calendar? Put up your shutters and lock the door, and write or it, 'Gone for a walk.' Take my word for it, you would not lose any custom by it. You must take a good two hours' walk every day, or you may end by being guilty of murder, Mr. Morley."

He spoke lightly; but he looked hard at the moody man he was addressing, and John Morley's face perceptibly deepened in gloom. His fingers tightened over the ruler he had been using, and his eyes glistened darkly under his bushy eyebrows.

"More men are guilty of murder than you think," he answered; "but it is not a daily walk that will save a soul from crime."

"It would go far to save yours," said Grant eagerly; "only put yourself into my hands, and try it. Instead of sitting here in this dull room, wearing your heart and your brains out in brooding over Heaven knows what, go out into the sunshine and bracing air of the fields; you'd be as far from murder or any other sin as a child is."

"You are a boy yet," replied John Morley, "and scarcely know what you talk about. You do not know what it is for God's sun to give you neither heat nor light, and for the cool winds to make the fever of your heart the hotter. But I run no risk of being guilty of murder—not I. Why me, more than any other man? or why murder, more than any other crime?"

He gazed darkly and suspiciously at Grant, whose open face had exchanged its frank smile for an air of disquietude, and who returned his gaze apparently with words upon his tongue which he longed to speak, but the moment for which was not yet come.

"Mr. Morley," he said in an altered tone, "you told me, ten days ago, that you did not know the man whom I found nearly murdered at your door."

"No," he answered; "he is a stranger to me. He must be a stranger in the town; for if he belonged to Little Aston, he would have been missed. Has he told you who he is?"

"You see why I think of murder," said Grant, "it is no wonder that my mind runs upon it. At your own door a murder was well-nigh accomplished, and the victim was only saved by a mere accident—the barest chance. It is a strange story. Has the man an enemy? Who struck that blow? Where did the assassin escape to? Where is he now? Is there any meaning in the spot where he was almost murdered? I ask myself these questions over and over again, and I suspect every man I meet."

Grant spoke vehemently, but with a suppressed earnestness, more impressive than passionate. Hester felt a sickening dread and faintness creep

over her, yet she scarcely knew what dim suspicions were taking hold of her mind. She listened breathlessly for her father's reply.

"They are grave questions," he said calmly; "but your patient alone can answer them. It is a case for police investigation, and it should have been put into their hands at once. I suppose any other man but myself would have done it. But do you not know the stranger's name yet?"

"Yes," answered Grant, still scanning John Morley's face with close scrutiny, "but I hold it as a trust which I am not to betray. He has resolved also to conceal the savage attack made upon him, out of consideration for his supposed enemy. The whole thing is to be kept a secret; even from his own family. No one will know it except ourselves, and with us it will be safe."

"It will be safe with me," said John Morley; "but this is a stranger story than before. An attempt at assassination in a quiet, remote town like this, and the victim of it is anxious to hush it up! Who is this man, and where does he come from? What does he suppose is the motive for the crime? This mystery, mark you, is being acted within my own walls. I must see the stranger and question him; it is only fitting that I should know more about it."

John Morley's face was lit up with a new expression of sinister interest and resolution. He rose from his chair, straightened his bowed shoulders, and lifted up his drooping head. Hester trembled, but she did not dare to speak; she did not know yet what she dreaded or suspected.

The twilight had already begun to gather in this house, surrounded by so many higher walls. John Morley turned the key in his shop-door, that no one might enter while he was absent; and as he returned to his sitting-room behind it, he said in a lighter tone, "I will follow your advice; I am about to leave my business to take care of itself for awhile."

CHAPTER THE TWENTY-FIFTH.

"SAY GOOD-BYE."

HESTER had only time to fly up-stairs to the little room where she had left Robert Waldron, and lower the blind over the window to add to the gloom and duskiness of the evening. With a hurried and importunate voice she addressed herself to him.

"My father is coming," she said; "oh, be careful what you say! He has suffered so much, and from you. If it is possible, hide from him who you are."

He entered the room as she finished speaking, closely followed by Grant. The light was very dim, and, such as there was, it fell full upon the face and figure of John Morley, so eloquent of ruin and loss and utter wreck, that Robert, who had longed to

see for himself the change that others reported as wrought in him, felt his eyes fastened and held by a spell which he could not conquer. He was, on his part, in the shade, and the ten years which had passed over him had been those which transform a youth of three-and-twenty into a man in the prime of life. There was little danger that John Morley would recognise in this bearded stranger, still wearing a bandage about his head, the gay, handsome, thoughtless boy, whom the world was inclined to blame but little for his follies and faults. But Grant and Robert Waldron were not alarmed by the fear of discovery. There was not a doubt in their minds that it was this man's hand, thin and white as a scholar's, but nerved with long-cherished hatred, which had scarcely missed of murder.

"Mr. Grant tells me," said John Morley, lowering his voice to a very quiet key, "that you are now out of danger, and will soon be able to be moved. Have you communicated with your friends?"

"Not yet," answered Robert in tremulous and indistinct tones.

"They will be anxious about you," he resumed, "and I am afraid you will find the accommodation of my house very limited. Such as it is, you are very welcome to it; but the situation is confined, and not good for an invalid. Still you or Mr. Grant have only to make your wants known to my daughter Hester, and we will do all in our power to make your sojourn here comfortable. I beg that you will not leave until you feel quite equal to the effort."

The words were hospitable and polite, and his manner did not belie them. There was something of an antique and laborious courtesy about him—the ceremoniousness of an old school—but it commanded respect; and Robert Waldron bowed, and murmured a few words of thanks.

"But," said John Morley distinctly, "you would do me a favour—one that you will not refuse me, I am sure—by letting us know the name of the stranger who is within our doors."

Hester held her breath to listen. It was a moment of intense anxiety to her. In all her life, immured and isolated as it had been, she had never heard a lie spoken—and now she trembled between the desire of having the truth concealed at all hazards, and the dread of having a falsehood uttered at her instigation. She had been very near the sin herself only a few minutes before; and a sharp pang shot through her as she waited for Robert Waldron's untruth. Her conscience kept the sensitiveness of a conscience which knew nothing of the evil world outside her father's house.

"My name is Roberts," he said unhesitatingly. "I am unknown here, and my family is in London."

"And may I ask further what you mean to do about this affair?" asked John Morley.

"Nothing," he answered.

"Nothing!" echoed John Morley; "excuse me, but I find your decision singular. Would it be possible to furnish us with any explanation?"

"Certainly," said Robert; "I believe I know the man; I could lay my hand upon him at any time. I know what has driven him to crime, and I must pass it over. He is safe from me, and would to God I could feel that he is now avenged! I shall keep out of his way for the future."

He looked up significantly and imploringly into John Morley's grey, worn face, which underwent no change while he spoke. He stood opposite to him in the dim light, his white head bowed towards him; and Robert Waldron could no longer keep back the tears and sobs which overmastered him.

"You are still very weak," said John Morley soothingly, "and if I have wearied you by my questions, I pray you to forgive me. When you are more able to bear it, I will speak to you again on this subject. In the meantime make my house your home until your friends come to you, or you can go safely to them. Both you and Mr. Grant are welcome here. I leave you to his care now."

The interview had been a short one, but it was quite long enough for Robert Waldron. He had seen face-to-face the man who had forbidden him to set his foot in any place where he could by any chance encounter him. There had been nothing in his words or in his manner to betray that he knew him, but Robert could not doubt it. To his mind it seemed as if there was now a tacit and covert reconciliation between them. It might be one never to be displayed openly to the world; but there was a fairer balance of injury between them, which might well satisfy John Morley's resentment. He felt no apprehension of further vengeance, though he might remain in his dwelling. If John Morley had lifted up his hand against his life, it had been in a moment of ungovernable passion, which had come upon him unawares. The man was too stricken, too impassive in his profound melancholy, to exert himself to active hate. He could not lash his heavy spirit into schemes of revenge. Robert Waldron felt that he could rest where he was in perfect safety.

Besides, the agitation of the day had thrown him back in his recovery, and he did not leave his room again for some time. While Hester was feverishly anxious to get him removed before there was a chance of her father seeing him again, he gave himself up to the fretful languor of a tedious convalescence, which was only soothed by her occasional visits to him. He preferred her quiet little study to the great, empty apartments of Aston Court, and the attendance of the old house-

keeper. He was in no hurry to leave a place possessing the peculiar charm for him, perilous yet pleasant, which an outlaw might feel in being under the roof of the authority who has proclaimed his outlawry.

At the end of a few days, however, Grant announced to him that the time was come when he ought to leave John Morley's house. Robert had confided his whole story to him, and Hester had impressed upon him the necessity of so effecting the removal that no suspicion should be awakened in the town. Little Aston had been very curious both with respect to the doctor and his patient; but Grant and Roberts were names altogether unknown there, and John Morley either could not or would not reveal anything more about the strangers. Late at night, therefore—a night when John Morley was attending a service at the chapel—a cab, which Grant had hired from a town some miles distant, drove up to the door; and Robert Waldron, well wrapped up, and leaning feebly upon Grant's arm, descended to the large old kitchen which formed the entrance-hall of the house.

"Hester," he said, "say good-bye to me kindly."

She put her hand in his for a moment, but would not let it linger in his clasp.

"Hetty," he said sorrowfully, "you have not forgiven me yet."

"Oh! I do forgive you," she said in a tone of anxiety; "but I want you to get away. I have had no peace since I knew who you were. Do not think me unkind. I am very, very sorry for you, and I hope that some time you will be quite happy again. It is no use for both you and my father to be miserable all your lives long. Good-bye."

"And am I never to see you again, Hester?" he asked, gazing with a quiet thrill of admiration at the rare refined beauty of her thoughtful face.

"It will be best not," she answered; "no, you cannot see me. You must keep your promise now, and never come near my father again. I know what you think, and what Mr. Grant thinks about him, and perhaps it is true. But you must never come near us again. What would have become of me and of him if you had been found dead?"

Her hands were clasped for an instant, and a shadow of terror crossed her face. Robert Waldron loitered still, regarding her fixedly, as though knowing it was for the last time. An old clock which stood in a dark corner of the apartment struck eight, and Hester started with alarm.

"Oh, make haste!" she cried, "go quickly, for my father will be at home in five minutes. Good-bye—good-bye."

MODERN GREECE.

BY PROFESSOR D. T. ANSTED, M.A., F.R.S., ETC.

IN THREE PARTS.—PART THE THIRD



THENS, no doubt, is the eye of Greece, and must ever be dear to the national memory; but situated as it is some miles from the sea, and not well placed for commerce, according to modern views of convenience, it has increased so rapidly, and has been ornamented so liberally, rather from a sense of its numerous and important aesthetic claims, than as a natural growth arising out of the increasing commerce and wealth of the country. Other towns must be looked at, if we would see the real cause of the improvements in the capital. Of these none is perhaps more important than Syra.

Situated on an island not naturally productive, small in size, and long neglected as utterly unimportant, Syra has the great advantage of being well placed on the great highway from the busy and manufacturing West to the productive countries on the shores of the Eastern Mediterranean and the Black Sea. It is the central island of the Cyclades, and from the high ground behind the town may be counted nearly a score of islands, forming a complete circlet around it. It is, like many of the Greek islands, of the form of a scimitar, high land on three sides enclosing a large sheltered bay.

On the shores of this bay, since Greece became for a second time a country, a town has sprung up, which now numbers more than 25,000 busy and prosperous inhabitants. The old Venetians, paramount in the Mediterranean, were not ignorant of the importance of this island, and a cluster of houses forming the remains of their old town covers the sides of the hill rising above the modern town, and is crowned by a church, from which there is a fine view of the new town, the bay, and the nearer islands. But the necessities of the Middle Ages, and the danger then felt from pirates, rendered it expedient to build towns at some distance from the shore, and for commercial purposes they were comparatively useless. The modern Syra hugs the water, and the houses are crowded round the shores of the bay in a continuous street more than a mile long, and another a little above, and parallel to it. By degrees the old Roman Catholic town above, and the young Greek town below, show a tendency to meet, but not on equal terms. The large Greek element is increasing at

the expense of the Italian. The modern Greeks are clever, active, ardent traders, and know well how to take advantage of natural conditions favourable to them. Already there are factories of various kinds, docks, ship-yards, and all kinds of stores for the supply of ships. The harbour is always crowded with shipping, and on an average about forty ships a week touch here on their way between the West and the East. From Syra it is easy to reach Malta, Messina, or Marseilles; the Ionian Islands, Brindisi, and Trieste; Alexandria, Syria, Asia Minor, Constantinople and the Black Sea, and the Piræus.

And not only are the inhabitants of this little island good traders and hardy mariners. With little help from nature, they have set to work in good earnest to render their island fertile, and by dint of hard labour have succeeded in making the earth yield products which neither the rich plains of Attica nor the country round Constantinople can rival. They supply both these markets with early vegetables. Having certain advantages of climate owing to insular position, and the entire absence of frost, they are enabled to grow garden produce with extraordinary advantage, and they realise large profits from this source. It need not be observed that Syra, under the Turks, never sent an artichoke or an early potato to Constantinople, still less to Athens. Besides early vegetables, there is a certain manufacture carried on in Syra, namely, the Rahat-likoum, a kind of half-solid paste of starch, sugar, and other substances, very delicately fabricated, flavoured with various essences, and sometimes stuffed with pistachio nuts, very highly appreciated by Turkish ladies, and not unknown in the Western capitals. This delicate and rather costly sweetmeat is now made in Syra so much better than elsewhere, that it is an object of trade not at all unimportant, and no doubt exceedingly profitable.

Syra is not remarkable for the taste or beauty displayed in its buildings, whether public or private, but it makes up in activity and energy what is wanting in these matters. It is one of the most important towns of modern Greece.

Patras is also a very rapidly improving town. Its success is chiefly owing to the trade in currants, the country around being the part of Greece where that curious and valuable variety of the grape is chiefly cultivated. Like all vine-growing districts, it suffered much during the continuance of the grape disease, but has lately taken large strides and has increased greatly in population. Patras is

a pleasant town, with magnificent views from the high ground around. It is now a principal station of the line of steamers connecting all the principal commercial towns of Greece. From it there is bi-weekly communication with Athens and Zante, and weekly departures from Zante on the one side to Argostoli and Corfu, and on the other to Cerigo and Nauplia.

Tripolitza, in the interior of the Morea, is the only other large town. Its population is increasing rapidly, and now amounts to nearly 18,000. It is connected with Nauplia by a carriageable road, but there are no public conveyances.

Several of the smaller towns are also flourishing. The miserable remains of the mediæval town of Corinth—almost all indications, except those found in the tombs of the ancient city and the Acropolis bearing that honoured name, have long since passed away—were finally destroyed and rendered utterly uninhabitable by an earthquake about nine years ago. Since then a new town has arisen, not indeed on the ashes of the old town, but on the shore at the head of the Gulf of Lepanto, close to the isthmus, which already consists of a goodly group of new houses disposed in straight wide streets, and including some buildings of considerable pretension. New Corinth, as it is now called, is the steamboat station for trans-shipment in connection with the Athens and Patras line, and is evidently very flourishing. Among other things it carries on a small trade in ancient Greek vases and coins, which are found in great abundance and beauty in the cemetery of the ancient town. Nauplia, near the ancient Argos, is also of some importance as a steamboat station, and as the port of Tripolitza and the Central Morea.

Wherever, indeed, there is communication established, there is evident and great material improvement in Greece. Even in the interior of the Morea, and of the large island of Eubœa (Negropont), the population is steadily increasing, and cultivation as steadily improving; but it is chiefly on the coast that progress is manifest. Wherever steam makes its way, civilisation is found to exhibit itself in the way of increased wealth, a concentration of the population, and increased intelligence; and nowhere is this more clearly seen than in modern Greece.

But the intellectual activity of the Greeks, marvellous as we know it to have been at one time, does not seem exhausted, and with equal opportunities the Greek will to this day make his way and succeed in fair competition with any other European. He seems to combine the subtlety and astuteness of the Eastern with the plodding perseverance of the Western character. The Greeks are good sailors and good merchants; they build excellent boats, and are thoroughly good architects and builders. They are natural orators, and, unfortunately, determined and indefatigable politicians.

All these their ancestors were two thousand years ago, and they have not lost their inheritance.

But it will be said by many who know Greece and the Greeks well, that I am describing all their virtues and pointing out none of their defects. It is certainly not fair to present only one side of any subject to view, and it is not my intention to omit the shading from this picture. The Greeks have with all these virtues many and serious faults, which have long interfered with their progress, which still do so, and which will probably long continue to do so. Their defects, like their virtues, are radical, and will be found very difficult to root out. As a people they are fickle, changeable, and difficult to govern.

There is only one house of representatives, and to this all have the right of election. It will be long before this right is exercised judiciously, and meanwhile the country is badly and imperfectly governed. The deputies are paid (they receive about £75 sterling each for the session of six months, and more if the session is repeated in the same year, which is not unfrequent), and this payment makes it an object with some very unfit persons to be elected. It is to be feared, indeed, that the great end in view with many members of the Chamber is to make use of the pay to live idly, and to employ their influence, which cannot but be considerable with a government that can never hope for an absolute working majority, to obtain places for themselves and friends.

But these place-holders are all liable to removal at the next election, and every member is in constant alarm lest some unexpected mischance should force on a dissolution. The representative, therefore, when elected has little independence of action, and as in many cases the electors are absolutely ignorant of the commonest political events of the century, he is obliged to shape his course so as to adapt himself to their ignorance and prejudice rather than to his country's good. This is not perhaps the case in the capital, and in the larger and more intelligent constituencies; but these form a small minority of the whole, and in the smaller and thinly inhabited islands it becomes a very serious difficulty. The main body of the people are certainly not yet at all fitted to perform properly the duties that devolve on them at the time of a dissolution arising from a change of government, and as this happens frequently, and changes of government still more frequently, the whole working of the constitution is irregular and unsatisfactory. Whatever it may have done or may do elsewhere, universal suffrage has not shown itself an available system in Greece.

As a people, the Greeks naturally and not unreasonably think that all ancient Greece, and all countries in which the Greeks form a large part of the existing population, and where the Greek tongue prevails, should be restored to independence under

the same sovereign. This may, perhaps, happen some day, but it will not be owing to the conduct of the Greek Government, unless some great and fundamental change should take place. Instead of concentrating their power by husbanding their resources, and employing them in the intelligent development of the great natural advantages of their country, they would, if allowed, waste themselves in vain efforts to wrest from Turkey by main force the countries that still remain under her influence. They must show a much better internal organisation than they have yet done; they must come to some understanding among themselves; above all, they must improve their own roads and cultivate their lands; they must learn to submit to a wise superintendence with regard to enclosures and planting—in a word, they must abandon in a measure their Oriental habits, and assume some of the subordination of classes which belongs to Western civilisation, before they can be in a position to take their share of the fair inheritance that will some day have to be divided among the nations of Eastern Europe.

If Turkey dies out before Greece occupies this position, she will receive little addition to her territory. Russia and Austria will then divide the spoil, or another great Slavonic power will arise to claim it. The longer the event is postponed, the better the chances of Greece, if she knows how to take advantage of them. Hitherto there has been enormous material progress in Greece, but little improvement in organisation, and it remains to be

seen whether the educational advance, about which there is no doubt, is of such a nature as to render it likely that the next generation, or the next after that, will obtain useful experience and knowledge.

The education at present is real and considerable, but it is not of the kind that in Western Europe would be considered practical. It is discursive, and rather tends to confirm the weaknesses of the national character than to strengthen the moral sense. It may no doubt improve, and as it has grown up of itself as one of the results of freedom, it will be interesting for Western nations to watch its progress. It may safely be said, however, that no such original scheme could so soon have become popular, and at least partially successful, in any other country of the world that had been ground to the dust and trampled under foot for centuries, as Greece had been. That the material progress of the country and the intellectual culture—the eager thirst for knowledge and the restless determination to try every experiment in politics—should have reacted upon each other, producing much excitement and boastfulness, with many serious shortcomings in matters essential, is not perhaps extraordinary; but it is very extraordinary, and well worth the thoughtful attention of those who find fault with Greece for having said so much, that there is a real and solid framework gradually rising which may, when more advanced and consolidated, constitute the basis of a powerful Greek kingdom, that may form a useful and unexpected barrier against the advance of Slavonic peoples into Europe.

WATCHING.



ONE night I sat and listened for his coming,
Listened and waited long;
Then, like a summer bee, I fell to humming
Snatches of hopeful song.

But some caprice o'ertook me in the singing—

Some elf, with mocking whim,
Echoed my carol with a woful ringing
Of utterance crossed and grim.

My song became a sigh, as if a sorrow
Had fallen on my heart;
My song, "We meet, my love and I, to-morrow,"
Was now "Dear love, we part."

And, though secure in joy, I turned to pond'ring
On mingled themes of pain;
Shaping to this in fearful, troubled wond'ring—
"If he comes not again?"

"If this brief waiting were a life-long seeking;
If these mad fears were true;
And this unsummoned voice, within me speaking,
Into conviction grew?"

"If, though this instant face to face expecting,
Never should he return;
What if that slight farewell, all unsuspecting,
Had been for Death's eterne?"

I could not think—my heart sank down in anguish—
Nor see, for Hope was blind;
He gone, I in the toiling race must languish,
The envied goal resigned.

"For who would care," so moaned I in my sadness,
"For such as I alone?
I borrow of his light, his sunny gladness,
Which goes when he is gone.

"Never return!"—But in that instant's pining
My weary grief had flown,
His eyes upon my moistened cheek were shining,
I was no more alone!

But in those hours of watching I descended
Chasms of prescient woe,
By his caressing arm alone defended
From griefs I yet may know.

MARY J. SAWYER.

LE CAPITAINE PAUL.



"I BORE HER DOWN."

IA COMTESSE MARIE holds festival
 In the fairest nook of her fair demesne,
 For courtly gallants and smiling dames
 To mimic the sports of the village green,
 In hats à la paysanne looped up with gems,
 And rustic kirtles of satin sheen.

But Comtesse Marie, though crowned with may,
 Scarce smiles on the lovers who round her press,
 And sits on her floral throne distraite,
 Nor heeds who, watching her, strives to guess
 What troubles this heiress, free to choose
 From the proudest peers of the haute noblesse.

She sighs—and a suitor the sigh repeats ;
 Again—and another bends over her chair,
 For every mood of a lady charms
 When la dame is so wealthy, and young, and fair ;
 She speaks—and the murmur of talk is hushed,
 And they throng around with expectant air :

" Too sad to sing, and too tired to dance—
 Shall our sports take soberer cast to-night ?
 And gathering under the fragrant limes,
 Shall we tell old stories of maidens bright,
 Of crusader bold, and the Soldan grim,
 Or dreary legend of ghost and sprite ? "

Then gay De Norville, for wild weird tale
 To please the ladye, has racked his brain ;
 While Saint Leu, with twirls of his huge moustache,
 His last duello fights o'er again,
 And fancies that Marie's cheek grows pale
 As he lightly dwells on his wounds and pain.

But on one tall figure, that stands aloof,
 The eye of la comtesse is seen to fall ;
 " And hast *thou* nothing to tell ? " she asks,
 " Canst thou from the past no deed recall,
 That might quicken awhile our sluggish blood ?
 Bethink thee, I pray, good Capitaine Paul."

Le Capitaine Paul, whom no one knows,
 A soldier of fortune scarred and browned,
 A man more prized in the camp than court,
 Steps into the circle, and glances round ;
 And scornful eyes on his boldness frown,
 But Marie has smiled, and he holds his ground.

What boots the rest if *she* bids him speak ?
 What matter who lists if he gains *her* ear ?
 The shaft of malice is launched in vain,
 That aims at the stranger a barbed sneer,
 And the sauciest suitors of belle Marie
 Unchecked may flout him while she is near.

He turns from the guests, with their covert smiles,
 Begins with a stammer, and speaks by rote,
 Till treasured memories awake—and then
 His full lip quivers, and swells his throat,
 And his sinewy hand has clenched, as oft
 It hath clenched at the ring of the bugle's note.

And thus le capitaine tells his tale :
 " Revolt and faction had cursed our land—
 Tonnerre ! that Frenchmen should be such curs !
 Our city walls were but poorly manned ;
 I—sous-lieutenant—a boy in years ;
 Our brave commander, Jacques Enguerrande.

" Light-hearted and fearless we kept our ward,
 Bons camarades all, and rarely heard
 How the fiery evil spread, nor dreamed
 How closely around us it seethed and stirred,
 But needing to fan it into a flame
 A rebel's touch, or a rebel's word.

" We had one treasure, we soldiers, then—
 Enguerrande's daughter, a happy child ;
 She had no mother, but fifty slaves,
 By her winning looks and ways beguiled—
 Great bearded fellows—were at her call,
 And felt themselves paid if their mistress smiled.

" Who would not have loved this little one,
 Gay as the birds we caught and tamed,
 Sweet as the flowers we wreathed for her ?
 The noisiest brawler slunk off ashamed,
 And over the veteran's rugged face
 A soft look stole, if she were but named !

" One night—sharp—sudden—resistless broke
 The storm upon us : from every den
 The lawless rabble came howling forth,
 And we—ah, blind ! not to learn till then,
 That in all that city we loved so well,
 There was but one handful of loyal men !

" On came the mob in their devilish haste
 The weak to pillage, the strong to slay ;
 And bravely we met them ; the eagle eye
 Of Jacques Enguerrande kept them long at bay ;
 But at last, with a rush, they had borne us back,
 And our foremost rank dead or dying lay.

" For life, for honour we fought, and still
 Our foes increased as the tumult spread ;
 Yet side by side with Jacques Enguerrande
 I stood till we fell together—he, dead ;
 I, wounded—how badly, these scars reveal ;
 And then our last man, in his terror, fled.

" Over our bodies the crowd tramped on,
 Nor recked if 'twere brothers their feet defiled ;
 The city was all their own, and the greed
 Of plunder had made them mad or wild ;
 And I heard one voice, with a drunken laugh,
 Call out for the child, Jacques Enguerrande's child.

" At that sound the blood to my heart returns,
 And fiercely I struggle on to my knees !
 Never must Enguerrande's orphaned one
 Fall into such miscreant hands as these !
 To my feet and away, ere the roaring mob
 Can hunt back the wounded wretch who flees !

" Doubling upon them, and first to gain
 The little chamber wherein she slept,
 Where, roused from repose by the horrid din,
 In the darkest corner she cowered and wept,
 I bore her down by a winding stair,
 And into the streets with my burden crept.

" Hushing her sobs I staggered on,
 Faint, dizzy with pain, and perhaps despair ;
 For sadly we needed some refuge safe,
 And who would offer it ?—nay, who dare ?
 Till an aged crone peeped fearfully out
 Of her wretched hovel, and hid us there.

"But, alas! though almost too old to live,
She feared the mob, and she feared to die,
And in selfish dread, when again night fell,
From her door she thrust us, and bade us fly;
Yet she flung me a blouse, and bonnet rouge,
That none should my soldier's dress descry.

"I donned them—hating myself the while—
For the gates with my precious charge I made;
If those were passed, in the woods beyond
I knew of many a bosky glade,
Where the child might hide till friends appeared
And the further spread of the riot stayed.

"Bribed with the little one's rosary—
Le voici, I have it here on my breast;
I bought it back for its weight in gold—
A fellow I drew aside from the rest,
Let us slip by while he kept the guard,
And like hunted deer for the woods we pressed.

"Scarce half a league from the city walls,
Lo! swooping down like a fiery blast—
Armed to the teeth, and hot with wrath—
Rank after rank spurring quickly past—
The avengers came of Jacques Enguerrande,
And I felt that his child was safe at last!

"She knew their leader—she shrieked his name—
He halted—I told you what garb I wore,
They thought me a rebel; the little one
With oaths and blows from my arms they tore,
And left me for dead on the cold hard earth;
But the child was safe—and my tale is o'er."

"But your payment?" a dozen voices ask,
And le capitaine smiles in his deep disdain;
"Pardon, mesdames, for a deed of love
No soldier his palm with gold would stain;
Only this boon did I ever crave—
One look at her angel face again!

"Qu'importe? she is rich and happy, and I—"
He pauses—la comtesse has left her throne;
Once more on his breast a fair head lies,
Once more round his neck are white arms thrown,
And sweet lips murmur, "Mon brave! mon brave!
Let my poor love for the past atone!"

The play is played, and the guests depart—
La comtesse was none so fair after all!
But many an eye looks back with regret
On the broad demesne, and the princely hall,
That Enguerrande's child with her hand bestows
On the scarred and sun-burned Capitaine Paul.
LOUISA CROW.

THE APPROACHING TRANSITS OF VENUS.

BY RICHARD A. PROCTOR, D.A. (CAMBRIDGE), HON. SEC. R.A.S.; AUTHOR OF "THE SUN," "OTHER WORLDS," ETC. ETC.

IN TWO PARTS.—PART THE FIRST.



PROPOSE to give a simple explanation of the circumstances which cause astronomers to look forward with interest to the approaching transits of the planet Venus across the face of the sun.

To save space (for the matter is, in reality, one which would require a volume for its complete elucidation*), I shall not here explain the laws according to which transits of Venus recur. Let it suffice to say that, though Venus comes between the earth and sun at regular intervals of about 584 days, she usually passes, at the time, so far either above or below the line joining the centres of the earth and sun, that she is not seen actually on the sun's face; but when, at the moment of passing between the earth and sun, she is close to one of those two points on her orbit where she

crosses the level in which the earth travels, she is seen as a round black dot on the solar disc, crossing it from east to west. This will happen on December 8th, 1874, and again on December 6th, 1882, but after that no transit will occur until the year 2004.

And now let us consider why these transits are interesting to astronomers.

The determination of the sun's distance is clearly most important in many respects. So far as the study of the motions of the solar system is concerned, the distance of the sun need not be exactly ascertained. As Newton long since pointed out, it matters nothing whether the sun be 50,000,000 miles from us, or 100,000,000, or 1,000,000,000,000, any more than as respects the indications of a clock-dial it matters whether the hands are an inch, or a foot, or ten feet in length. Astronomy, as a mathematical science, would not be in the least affected even though, by some inconceivable accident, it had happened that astronomers had over-estimated or under-estimated the sun's distance by many millions of miles.

But when we consider astronomy in its physical aspect, we see at once the importance and interest

* I venture to refer the reader who desires to inquire more thoroughly into this subject, to my essays on Astronomy, and my work on "The Sun," in which the principal details are described and illustrated more fully, I believe, than in any work yet published.

of the problem. If we remember that our ideas as to the size, not only of the sun himself, but of every member of his family except our own earth, depend on the determination of the sun's distance, we see at once that the significance of all the physical phenomena revealed by the telescope as in progress in these different orbs, must depend upon the same fundamental element. Supposing the sun's distance to be 95,274,000 miles, as until lately was supposed, his diameter amounts to 888,000 miles; but his diameter is reduced to less than 855,000 miles, when his distance is found to be about 91,670,000 miles. Now consider what this implies. We have struck off more than 30,000 miles from his diameter. But this amounts to striking off no less than 155,000 times the earth's volume, or about 39,000 times the earth's mass from the sun's. Then we must remember that the sun is the great central fire of the solar system, and the time that this great fire will continue to glow with light and heat depends, to no small extent, upon its size and the quantity of matter it contains. It is therefore no unimportant change in our ideas respecting the central fire and light, that we have had to diminish its mass by a quantity of matter exceeding 39,000 times the whole mass of this great globe on which we live.

And it is easily seen that similar considerations apply to the different planets of the solar system, to comets, to the stars (whose distances can only be determined by comparison with the sun's)—in fact, to the whole universe revealed by the telescope.

Now astronomers find in transits of Venus the means of solving this great fundamental problem of physical astronomy. Nor is it difficult to understand how this is.

When Venus seems to be crossing the face of the sun, she is in reality nearer to the earth than to the sun. She is travelling in mid-space between these two bodies, and as she moves in her path more rapidly than the earth in hers she seems to cross the sun's face from east to west.

When Venus seems to be crossing the face of the sun, she is in reality nearer to the earth than to the sun. She is travelling in mid-space between these two bodies, and as she moves in her path more rapidly than the earth in hers she seems to cross the sun's face from east to west.

Now, if we suppose E to be the earth, and S the centre of the sun (Fig. 1), while V is Venus between the earth and sun, we see that an observer at E would see the centre of Venus projected as at v on the sun, while an observer at E' would see the centre

of Venus projected as at v' . If Venus would obligingly stay as at V for an hour or two, and the earth would cease to rotate during the same time, the observers at E and E' could manifestly determine the sun's distance, as follows:—

E and E' are known stations. Say that they are 6,000 miles apart (for we cannot set observers exactly at opposite points on the earth's globe). Then it is known that the distance of Venus from the sun is less than the earth's, in the proportion of about 7 to 10; so that EV is as 3 where VV' is as 7. Clearly, then, the distance EE' is less than vv' in the proportion of 3 to 7; and since EE' is 6,000 miles, vv' is 14,000 miles. Now the ob-

server at E can see what sv measures, either absolutely or as compared with the sun's seeming diameter. The observer at E' can do the like with the distance sv' . And afterwards, comparing notes, they can tell what vv' measures. Say, for instance, it measures the 60th part of the sun's seeming diameter. Then this diameter is 60 times 14,000, or 840,000 miles.

And, of course, knowing the sun's diameter, and also how large he looks, the astronomer knows the sun's distance also.

This is too manifest, perhaps, to need any explanation; but if not, the reader will at once see that it must be so, if he considers that the following simple experiment would suffice for determining the sun's distance

when his diameter is known:—A halfpenny is exactly one inch in diameter. Now let a halfpenny be attached, as at H (Fig. 2), to a carrier sliding on a straight rod, AC , ten or twelve feet long, on which inches are marked, and the rod being then turned so as to point towards the sun (which can easily be done by noting when its shadow is least), let the slider carrying the coin be moved until the sun is just hidden from an eye placed at A . Suppose this to happen when the coin is at B : then to whatever degree the distance AB exceeds the diameter of the coin, so much does the sun's distance exceed his diameter. That is, since the diameter of the coin is exactly one inch, we must multiply the diameter of the sun, or 840,000 miles, by the number of inches contained in the distance AB , in order to deduce the sun's distance.

Of course, this is not the method adopted by

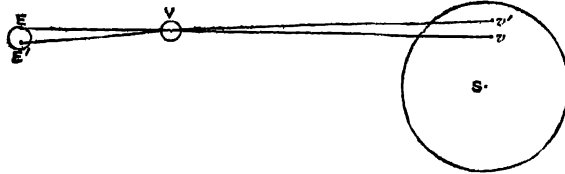


FIG. 1.

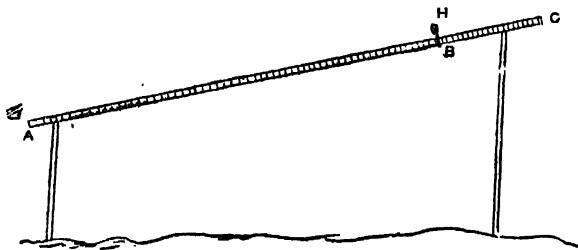


FIG. 2.

astronomers, who have far more delicate and accurate means of determining the sun's apparent size, and thence the relation between his distance and his diameter.

Now Venus, unfortunately, will not stay her course in the manner imagined above. As seen from the earth she *transits*—that is, passes across the sun's face, and this at such a rate that even if she went across the centre of his face she would occupy but eight hours. The observer has no opportunity of determining by actual measurement where she is at any moment, because astronomical measurements take time, and she is moving during the time so occupied.

Halley first suggested a way of getting over this difficulty. Returning to Fig. 1, let the reader suppose Venus to be moving towards him. Then manifestly, as seen from E and E', she will seem to cross the sun's face along two lines, one passing through *v*, and the other through *v'*. Let these lines be placed like *a b* and *c d*, in Fig. 3. Then we see that *c d* is longer than *a b*, and therefore Venus will be longer in traversing the line *c d* than in traversing the line *a b*. If the two observers carefully *time* the passage of Venus along these respective lines, they will know the relative lengths of the lines, and then it is a simple problem in geometry to determine the distance, *v v'*, between the lines. Thence the sun's distance can be determined as just shown.

Here we have been supposing the points E and E' to be at rest. But they are carried round by the

earth's rotation,* and they are thus shifted over a considerable distance, since a transit lasts several hours. We may here conveniently dismiss this point with the remark that the effect is to *hasten* the progress of Venus, as seen from all parts of the earth where the whole transit can be observed, except certain polar stations where the transit occurs during the nominal midnight hours (when nevertheless the sun is above the horizon).

There is another method of observing Venus on such occasions, invented by the French astronomer Delisle, and therefore called the French method, just as Halley's is commonly called the English method.

Reverting to Fig. 1, we see that as Venus moves onward there must be a moment when she is first of all visible on the sun's disc. This

will manifestly happen for a point on the *farther* side of the globe E E'. Venus will take an appreciable time before she has advanced so far that she is visible on the sun's face from *every* part of the illuminated side of E E'; and it is clear that the point of the earth at which her entry on the sun's face occurs latest, is on the *nearer* side of the globe E E'. If the difference of time between her entry as seen from the farther and nearer points of the earth's globe, just mentioned, be determined, Venus's rate of motion in her orbit is determined; and thence her distance from the sun at once follows.

Similar remarks apply to her egress from the sun's face.

END OF PART THE FIRST.

A BRAZILIAN PRISON.

IN TWO PARTS.—PART THE SECOND.

THE PRISONERS.



HIS is the library, senhor," says my guide, unlocking a small, narrow oaken door, and showing me into a very clean, well-furnished little cabinet, lined from roof to floor with shelves of neatly-bound books, chiefly of a religious kind. A closer inspection, however, shows me a liberal sprinkling of history, science, and poetry, including, to my great delight, several copies of the one Portuguese poet whose name has gone forth throughout all lands—brave old Miguel de Camoëns.

"Do the prisoners read much, then?" ask I; "I should hardly have thought they'd care for it."

"They do, though—such of them as *can* read. Sunday's a holiday with them, you know, and they have them in here by dozens, all day long. Those who can't read are taught by the chaplain."

"And where does he teach them?"

"Over yonder, in that room next the chapel," answers my cicerone, leading me across a little paved court, and up a winding stair at the farther corner, which conducts us to a long, low saloon, divided across the centre by a light railing, and with a dark curtain drawn across the farther end.

The first object which attracts my attention is a

* No account whatever need here be taken of the earth's motion in her orbit. That has been already taken into consideration, in noting that Venus crosses the sun's face with a motion due to the excess of her velocity over the earth's.

tall black-board, of the regular school-room pattern, across which is written, in white chalk, "TITO LIVIO"—my old school friend Titus Livy, under a Portuguese alias.

"That's one of the copies that the chaplain sets 'em," explains my chaperon; "and heré are some of the books that they use—all pretty plain and simple, you see—spelling, geography, arithmetic, and what not. Now, would you like to look at the chapel?"

The little sanctuary behind the curtain is merely a reproduction in miniature of the countless Brazilian churches which I have already seen; but it contains at least one noteworthy object—a superb altar-cloth, embroidered (as my guide informs me) by the prisoners themselves, and given by them as a freewill offering to their "holy place."

"They're good Catholics, most of our people," says my pilot, warming into a momentary enthusiasm, as he tells the story, "and they don't grudge a little trouble to make the holy place look neat and pretty. There have been worse offerings made to the church than that, after all."

"You say they're mostly Catholics; I suppose by that you have not many English or Americans?"

"No, not many—three Americans and two Englishmen—not more. Shall we go on?"

From the chapel we proceed to the baths—admirably clean and well constructed—during our survey of which my man in office gives me a little extra information. None of the prisoners, he tells me, are below sixteen years of age. The majority of them are either blacks or native Brazilians, with a sprinkling of Spaniards and Portuguese.

The female prisoners (who I find are confined in a separate ward on the other side of the building) are almost exclusively slaves committed for punishment by their owners—perhaps the sole feature in the entire programme that would grate upon the feelings of an Englishman. The turnkey is still pursuing his career of details, when the loud jingle of a bell from the opposite side of the courtyard interrupts his discourse.

"Come along, senhor," cries the lecturer, springing up; "that's the signal for the prisoners to carry back their dinner-things to the kitchen to be washed, and you will be just in time to see them filing in."

We hurry across the yard, and reach the entrance of the great corridor just as the head of the procession debouches from it.

Such a march past I have seldom seen. The coarse blue frock which constitutes the uniform of the prison leaves no distinction save the small square patch of red, green, or purple on the breast, which classifies them according to their good behaviour; but the various faces are a study worthy of Hogarth.

Some prisoners are sullen and brooding; some (more especially the negroes) wear the heavy, lumpish aspect of the "human animal without soul;" a few—the latest arrivals—are distinguished by an air of fierce restlessness, like caged beasts of prey; while in the eyes of others there is something worse than all—a look of silent, cruel expectation, such as one pictures in the face of an ambushed Thug when he sees his prey within reach.

Five of these latter wretches, in succession, do I pick out as murderers, and in every case I am right; for the satanic handwriting is legible enough when written in blood. With that unresting suspicion which is the curse of the habitual criminal, they guess that I am speaking of them, and shoot a glance at me in passing, which haunts me for days.

But among them is one figure which instantly rivets my attention—a tall, stalwart, fine-looking man, with crisp brown hair just beginning to turn grey, and a high bald forehead, from beneath which his large deep eyes look straight into mine with a firm, steadfast, penetrating gaze, as unlike the insolent stare of the fiercer ruffians as the stealthy sidelong glance of the assassins. There is an air of quiet dignity about the man, and a half-instinctive keeping aloof from his foul associates, which speak volumes.

As he passes me, I feel irresistibly impelled to accost him.

"You are an Englishman?" ask I, tentatively.

"I am," he replies, bowing slightly. His voice is clear and even fine, but with a tone of bitterness which seems habitual to it.

"Have you been long here?"

"Three years—and I have seven more to run. So they tell me, at least; but who knows? those who got me sent here have the power to keep me here, if they choose."

"Of what were you accused, then?" inquire I, struck by the bitter emphasis of the last words.

"This man will tell you," he answers, pointing to the turnkey; "for myself, I had rather not speak of it, if you will excuse me." And, with another slight bow, he passes on.*

(I afterwards learned that this man had been the instrument of a gigantic fraud upon the Government, the contriver and real mover of which was a native official of high rank—who, when the discovery became inevitable, fled with the spoil, leaving his poor subordinate to bear the brunt of the detection that immediately ensued. I have recently heard that the case has been laid before the Brazilian Government—with what result I have yet to learn.)

* This man was the only one who displayed any reticence on the subject of his crime. The other prisoners, without exception, were as candid as if they had been relating deeds of the highest merit.

We next proceed to inspect the cells, which, small as they are (perhaps twelve feet by five), are faultlessly clean and well ventilated, the little window at the back being always open, and the door merely a range of iron cross-bars, like the cages of a menagerie.

Each of these little cells contains a table, a chair, a tin basin and ewer, and a bed of light canvas, stretched on a frame, with a substantial coverlet; while in a few there are even books and writing materials lying upon the table.

"You see," explains my guide, "some of the best-behaved ones are allowed to take books into their cells, and to keep their lights in till ten o'clock. There's a ledge up yonder behind the windows, along which one of my men goes every evening to see that all's right in the cells, before putting the lights out."

At this hour (that allotted for out-door exercise) most of the cells are empty; but as I enter the last one, which is almost dark, something stirs in the further corner, and through the gloom appear two glittering eyes, and then the outline of a lean, sallow face, the white fangs of which stand out in an ugly grin, as the aroused wild beast crouches down once more.

"That's one of our murderers—I'd quite forgotten him," says the turnkey, brightening at this unexpected discovery. "We've *plenty* more somewhere," he adds, with the complacent emphasis of one vindicating the prison from an unjust aspersions; "when we go through the workrooms I'll show them to you. Now, then, would you like to have a look through the infirmary? it's just round the corner."

To the infirmary we go accordingly, and find a row of comfortably furnished cells, the occupants of which are for the most part either asleep or looking idly through their bars.

At the door of each cell is a small placard, inscribed with the name of the patient, his complaint, and the method of treatment under which he is.

As my guide and I pass through I exchange a few words with some of them, including one of the three Americans before mentioned (a lithe, swarthy, wild-eyed fellow from Louisiana, brimming over with the restless vitality of his race), and am just turning to go out again, when my eye catches a face such as one sees in the pictures of ancient martyrs—gentle and delicate and spiritualised, but with a subtle power underlying all. The face has all the warm, rich colouring of Creole beauty; but in the hollow cheek and large, bright, dreamy eye, there is a nameless something which I recognise only too well. He may perhaps be seventeen—certainly not more; but his next birthday must be spent elsewhere. In this world his allotted time is well-nigh run.

"Poor little wretch!" mutters the turnkey, his pitiless gaiety softening into a momentary touch of what might almost be mistaken for compassion; "he would be free in eight months more, but he'll never live to see it!"

The boy looks wistfully at us through his bars, guessing that we are speaking of him.

I attempt to give him a word or two of encouragement in passing, but somehow the words will not come; all that I can do is to pass my hand through the grating, and give him a friendly shake.

The pause was short, but the poor boy seems to understand me, and kisses my hand gratefully, settling back into his corner with a somewhat brighter face; but to me, at least (and perhaps to my guide likewise), it is a kind of relief when we find ourselves, a few minutes later, in the busy workrooms overhead.

And here, for the first time since entering the prison, I meet with a tableau which I can look upon without any feeling of repugnance. No brooding or moping, no dull apathy or wild-beast sullenness here; every one is hard at work, and enjoying it as only those can do, the interest of whose life is narrowed to its innermost circle.

Wherever I cast my eyes, tailoring, shoe-making, carpentering, bookbinding, in every department it is the same scene of brisk and ceaseless activity—the activity of men taking refuge from themselves in the bustle of occupation.

Among the books given to be bound (which, when ready, are sent into the town to be disposed of) I recognise a number of old friends—Alexandre Dumas' "Trois Mousquetaires," Sir Walter Scott's "Heart of Mid-Lothian," Victor Hugo's "Les Misérables," and many more.

The neatness of the binding, and the evident pride taken in it by the workers, are sufficiently noteworthy.

As I pass out of the last division, a negro steps forward from under the gateway, and exhibits triumphantly a neatly plaited straw hat, telling me that it is "all done to-day."

I inquire the offence for which he is confined.

"Murder," answers my cicerone, "and his sentence is imprisonment for life."

Yet the poor fellow is as lively as if on a party of pleasure.

Three o'clock strikes at length, and my tour of inspection is over.

I immediately take leave of my friend the turnkey (who wears a look of subdued complacency which might befit a great naturalist in the act of exhibiting his choicest specimens), and, drawing a long breath of relief, as the gate clangs to behind me, thank God, more fervently than ever before, that I am free to walk the earth as I will.

HESTER MORLEY'S PROMISE.

BY HESBA STRETTON,

AUTHOR OF "THE DOCTOR'S DILEMMA," ETC. ETC.

CHAPTER THE TWENTY-SIXTH.

A NEW PROMISE.

HESTER put her hand into Robert's, and hurried him to the door; but he had scarcely settled himself in the corner of the cab before John Morley came up. Grant was on the point of jumping in and closing the door; but now he stood with one foot upon the step, and turned round to speak to him.

"My patient is very much exhausted, sir," he said, "and I should be glad if you would dispense with any farewell. We shall not go far to-night, and I will write to you from where we stop. We will not loiter any longer than we can help in the night air; so good-bye, Mr. Morley."

"Have you all you need for the journey?" inquired Mr. Morley.

"All—everything," answered Grant hurriedly; "good-bye."

"Good-bye to you both," said John Morley, raising his hat from his white head. Robert leaned forward to have a last glance at him and Hester, as she stood in the lighted doorway, and then he fell back with a groan.

Grant accompanied his patient to the country town, from whence he wrote to Mr. Waldron in London, giving such an account of his son's accident and illness as would avoid exciting any suspicion of the truth. On the evening of the day upon which he had received the letter, Mr. Waldron was with his son, anxious for him, and grateful beyond measure to the young doctor. There was, he said, an opening for a medical man at Little Aston, and he urged him to settle there under his patronage. He was himself about to give up his public life at the close of the present session, as he felt old age creeping upon him, and his health beginning to fail. A medical attendant in whom he could have confidence would soon become essential to him; and he had a pleasant house at the end of the town nearest to Aston Court, where Grant could reside.

The young man hesitated but little. John Morley had once or twice expressed his opinion that a good country practice might be established there; and Grant had neither funds nor influence to back him if he attempted to launch himself upon a more ambitious career. He accepted Mr. Waldron's grateful offer with alacrity, and in a few weeks later John Morley and Hester saw him appear again upon their narrow stage at Little Aston.

It was not a step altogether to Robert Waldron's mind; but he was accustomed to let things take their course, and he did not oppose himself to this.

The sole reason he could have urged against it, even to himself, was one which he could not have presented in bare words to his own conscience. There was a very subtle and vague feeling of jealousy of his acquaintance with the Morleys, and of the footing he had already gained in the solitary and, to him, forbidden household. Hester, he thought—for so far he dared deal frankly with himself—was too rare and dainty a prize for a mere country doctor. He should be sorry if, after her hard and sorrowful girlhood, no brighter and more fortunate lot awaited her in the future.

When Robert returned to Aston Court in the spring, with the traces of his accident almost effaced, he found Grant lodging in a house nearly opposite to John Morley's, while he waited for the present tenant of his promised dwelling to leave. He was living therefore within the prohibited precincts; and, friendly as he was with Grant, Robert had a shrewd suspicion that it would not be quite safe to visit him there. There was but little need for him to do so, as Grant could come freely and safely to Aston Court, but his residence so near to Hester quickened and fanned the almost unconscious jealousy in Robert's nature.

Grant could see her daily; he heard her speak, he would teach her to smile, to laugh even; and then Robert recalled to mind the clear, sweet, uncertain laughter of the child Hester, in those days long gone by when he had taken her upon his knee and spoken to her the words he had hesitated to address directly to Rose. If he could only hear its music again! If he could only watch the languid lines about her lips melt and tremble into smiles! If he could but see the light come and go in her grave calm eyes, as her young heart stirred with new and happy thoughts! He was not in love with Hester; it would have shocked him to have dreamed of being so, in his inmost heart. She was still almost a child to him, and a child whose life he had robbed of all natural buoyancy and joy.

He wished he could, with his own hand, put her into possession of her proper inheritance of girlish gladness; but he did not like any other hand to do it. It went very far towards making him angry to think that a mere lad, uncultivated and poor, and with no attractions but his youth, should stand so fair a chance of doing what he could never do.

Before long Robert Waldron's vague envy took more definite form. It would be a shame, he argued, to let this pearl fall into hands so rough and coarse as Grant's, who would rob it of half its

delicacy and brilliance. Though she and her father might count it no bad settlement for her to become the wife of a doctor under Mr. Waldron's patronage, it would be but a poor lot for her. They would be sure to think well of Grant's prospects and position. For, after all, John Morley was no other than a poor tradesman, struggling with difficulties; and there was a stigma upon the name of Morley in Little Aston. The last thought stung him sharply. But then Rose had not been Hester's mother. The tie between them was very slight,

acquainted with her character. How could this be managed?

There remained yet two or three months of the session to run out before his father and sister returned to settle permanently at Aston Court; and Robert was not at all sure that their residence there would be favourable to his views.

Since his return Hester had never been to the Court. How to meet her again, with no excitement which should alarm her, or make her unwilling to speak to him, became the problem of his



'YOU MUST PERMIT ME TO SEND YOU SOME.'

and had lasted only for a few months. There was positively no relationship at all. At any rate, since he could not atone for the past to Rose or John Morley, was it impossible to do something for this little Hester, the child who had once been so fond of him? Could he not place her in some position where her grace and beauty would be better seen than in her present obscurity and poverty? He was rich himself, having already inherited an estate from his mother, and some day his wealth would be doubled. It would be easy for him to remove Hester from her own sphere to one where life would be all gaiety and brightness about her. But it would be necessary to see her often, and to make himself well

many idle hours. He haunted the beautiful fields and lanes of the neighbourhood, in the hope of crossing her path; but Hester was accustomed to walking early in the morning, at an hour when he scarcely knew that the sun had risen, and he haunted the fields and lanes in vain. It was only through Grant, who always avoided mentioning John Morley and Hester, that he could gain any information concerning her.

"You see the Morleys often, Grant," he said, one day, with an air of nonchalance.

"Most days," was the curt reply.

"Living directly opposite to them, you may see them without going to the house," said Robert.

"No," he answered, "all I can see is the window

of a room where the shutters have not been taken down since I lived there. I go in most days for a chat with the old man and Miss Hester."

"*L'ami de la maison*," observed Robert, with an ill-tempered sneer.

"And the only friend," responded Grant.

"Does poor little Hetty visit nowhere?" he inquired.

"Nowhere," replied Grant—"well, yes, at one house, and that is an odd one; and her friend is still more odd. I dare say you have no idea that there is such a place in Little Aston. It is a back court, with an alley leading to it, just opposite the chapel at the top of our street. There is a small baker's shop in the court, where family baking is done, and Hester's friend lives in the top storey of the baker's house. I went with her one day to visit her friend, who was ailing. The ailment was a mere nothing; but she turned out to be an old Frenchwoman who could not speak a word of English. Hester was obliged to interpret between us, and it was amusing enough, I assure you. I know very little of French, and I cannot understand a word she says."

"Who is she?" asked Robert.

"The mother of Lawson, Mr. Morley's book-binder," said Grant; "his father was a workman in a Parisian house, and married a Frenchwoman there. She only came over to her son a few months ago, and Hester goes to see her occasionally. It is her fête-day to-day, and she has invited me to make one of the party; but I shall not have time."

"Is she poor?" inquired Robert, with an air of sudden interest.

"I take it for granted," he answered, "since her son is only Mr. Morley's bookbinder. He is another curious study, well worth time; eats opium, and is a little shaky in the upper storey. Hester tells me he used to see visions, and that he is greatly depressed now they have ceased. I see him often."

"I don't know the man at all," said Robert; "but this old Frenchwoman must be a curiosity in Little Aston. I can talk any patois of French like a native, and I think I will go and see her."

"You had better not," said Grant significantly; "the court is exactly opposite the chapel in our street—you understand. You must keep away."

"That's a bore," said Robert Waldron, with a slight yawn of indifference.

But as soon as Grant had left him he turned his steps eagerly towards the house of Lawson's mother. By making a circuit he could reach the upper end of the street without passing near John Morley's house; and at this hour of the afternoon it was certain that he would be confined to it by his business.

The alley opposite the chapel was easily discovered, but he was an apparition so remarkable in

the court that all its scanty population turned out to stare at him, and the subdued clamour of their voices attracted the foreigner, whom he had come to seek, to her window. For the first moment Robert could scarcely believe he was in a town in England. The old half-timber house, with its very pointed gable surrounded by rotten wood-work, and the clear, fresh, coquettish, aged face of the Frenchwoman framed in the small lattice casement, was like a vision of the lands where he had spent so many years of his life. He mounted the winding staircase with swift steps. The old woman had opened the door, and the whole scene throughout seemed familiar to him. He presented himself before madame with all the courtesy and politeness which go far to win the people of her country. He could speak to her fluently, and the tears started to her eyes as she listened to her native tongue.

"Madame will pardon me," said Robert, "for intruding upon her, but I know France well—I have lived long in that charming country—therefore I have ventured to pay a visit here uninvited."

"Ah, Seigneur!" exclaimed madame, with vivacity, "but monsieur is the welcome one. Seat yourself, I pray you. You know France well? You have lived there? Oh, mon Dieu! talk to me about my dear country."

Robert accepted the seat she offered him near to herself, and took infinite pains to make an agreeable impression. It was not difficult. The delight of conversing in her own language freely became almost a transport and an ecstasy to her. She laughed, she wept, she nodded and tossed her head, she gesticulated to her heart's content, and, for the time, felt herself at home again. The hours in which Hester sat beside her, talking timidly in the unfamiliar words, were nothing compared to this golden hour when this charming stranger, so distinguished, so amiable, in so beautiful a toilette, listened to her, and did not require her to speak slowly and heavily. She had not been so happy since she left Burgundy.

"You are triste here," he said at the first pause in her flood of words; "have you no one to visit you?"

"No, I am never triste," answered the old woman gaily; "always I can think of making my toilette, and going out into the town; but that time never comes. There is rain, or there is no sun, or I have the migraine. But I am never triste—never. Then there is Miss Hester, my cherished one! She is coming to pay me a visit this evening. It is my fête-day, and we have a little feast together. We take tea here, because my son cannot buy the wines of France."

"You must permit me to send you some," interrupted Robert; "I, too, like the wines of France."

"But no! but no, monsieur!" cried madame; "a thousand thanks—but no!"

"Who is Miss Hester?" asked Robert.

"It is an angel," responded madame, with growing hilarity, "a veritable angel! She is perfectly charming, but triste, too triste for one so young: I say to her, 'Go to France, my cherished one—go, go. There the sun shines, and one laughs without knowing why.' She should visit my dear France, monsieur. Chut! I hear her voice below there."

They listened in silence, and heard Hester's low, pleasant voice speaking to the children who were playing about the door to make sure of seeing the stranger when he came out again. She came up rather slowly, step by step, as though feeling her way carefully through the gloom. Robert Waldron's heart stirred and his pulses throbbed as they had never done before; and he rose from his seat, partly from a restlessness of excitement, and partly to hide that excitement from the keen eyes of madame. He placed himself in a position so as not to be seen at once by Hester as she entered; and at the same moment a light tap upon the door announced her arrival.

She had come in, and the door was closed behind her without her perceiving any other person but the old friend she had come to visit; and Robert Waldron had time to notice, with a poignant sense of admiration, the delicate colour upon her cheeks, and the sweet faint smile upon her lips, as she stooped to receive the double kiss with which madame greeted her. When this ceremony of reception was ended, he stepped forward, calm apparently, but with a tremor through all his nerves which was strange to himself. Hester's eyes opened widely with an expression of alarm, and she made an involuntary movement, as if to escape from him and take to flight.

"I am going away instantly," he said, not venturing to approach her more nearly; "you are before your time, Hester. And yet," he added, looking into her candid eyes, and resolved to cast himself frankly upon the truth, "I own I came here solely to see you, and speak to you. Grant told me that you were coming to visit this old woman to-day, and I have introduced myself here for the chance of meeting you. There was no other opportunity, and I felt that I ought to see you once more."

"But why do you want to see me?" asked Hester, not angrily, but in a sorrowful voice which made his heart beat the faster; "what have you to say to me that can do either of us any good?"

"Child," he said, "there is much that I could say to you, and very much that I can do for you. Do you not understand that I must do everything in my power, for my own peace of mind, if not for the sake of making your life more happy? Now that I have been in your home, and seen the wreck there with my own eyes, there will be no more rest for me until I have repaired it in some measure,

however little. I could not know by any other means all that I had done; and do you suppose I can now forget it? I remember your father a happy man, growing rich, and with a successful future before him. I have seen him now, and his ruin is before me day and night."

He spoke with so much earnestness, that he began to feel as if pity for her father was the real and most deeply rooted motive of his conduct. He had no purpose to deceive Hester. He was, in fact, deceiving himself, and his handsome face wore an aspect of profound and solemn remorse.

"And you," he continued, "the child who loved me, the little girl who used to watch for my coming and brighten into smiles when you saw me, my heart aches to see you thus. Hester, who will give you back the lost laughter of your childhood? Who can recall these gloomy days, which ought to have been steeped in brightness? If I could but call back the past, and once more set us all as we were ten years ago, I would pay down my life gladly as the price."

Hester raised her eyes to his, and read in them an expression which fully sustained the words he was speaking. It was not in her nature to doubt, and experience had not taught her to suspect. She let Robert Waldron take her cold hand in his own, and stood beside him, trembling, but calm and grave.

"Is there nothing I can do for you?" he asked in a pleading tone; "your face always wears a look of care. Is it anything besides the old trouble? Let me speak frankly to you, my child, for you are still no more than a child to me—the little Hetty you used to be. I am rich, and from many persons I hear that you are poor. If there be any time when money becomes a pressing want with you, will you look to me as an elder brother whose greatest satisfaction would be to do anything for you? Is there nothing I can do for you now? Have you no anxiety which I could take away from you at once?"

"There is nothing you can do," answered Hester, with drooping eyelids, and lashes burdened with tears which did not fall.

"Yet think," urged Robert Waldron; "for my sake give me something to do for you. It is to give me relief from the remorse I feel. Have you no wish which you could entrust to me? Is there nothing you want to do if you had the means? I am a man, an idle man, with nothing to occupy me. I would do anything for you."

Hester looked up to him again with her truthful and searching gaze, and retreated to the side of the Frenchwoman, who had been standing by with an eager curiosity, unable to comprehend a syllable of the earnest words which were being spoken. The girl's young face was as white as marble, and almost as motionless, except for the flicker of the

light in her eyes, which seemed to be kindled from within.

"I have had one wish," she said, with pallid lips that scarcely parted to whisper it, "ever since I knew that *she* was lost. You are a rich man, and an idle one, and you want to make atonement. Find her whom we have lost; find her who loved you. I think of her day after day, and I ask God to bring her back to me every morning and night. She was so kind and so pretty—I dare not call her good now. I wonder what has become of her—where she is at this minute—what she is doing or suffering. Oh! if I had been you, I should never have given up seeking for her."

"Good heavens, Hester!" he exclaimed, "do you suppose I did not do all I could to find her? I left her at Falaise while I came over to England on business, and when I returned there was not a trace of her to be found. I did everything in my power at the time."

"I have read in books," said Hester, with an air of wisdom, "that it is no sorrow to get rid of a woman of whom one is tired. You were already getting tired of her, perhaps. There was no longer any pleasure in being near her. Did you try to find her as you would have done if she had been your sister or your wife who was lost to you?"

At another time Robert Waldron might have smiled at the tone of girlish sagacity with which Hester spoke; but just now he was conscience-stricken. No, he had not sought for Rose with the persevering energy he would have used had she been really dear to him. So far Hester's wisdom, drawn only from books, was right; and yet he had made many efforts and taken a good deal of trouble, both at the time and since. Rose had been tolerably well supplied with money, and she was no child when she quitted him. He had often taken refuge in the reflection that she was a little older than himself. But now that he saw Hester, wise only with the wisdom of books, and knowing nothing of real life, but burdened with an overpowering anxiety as to the fate of the missing woman, he felt as if he had been shamefully negligent in his attempt to discover her.

"I cannot talk more about it," cried Hester, a burning flush mounting to her white cheeks and her calm forehead; "but I have no other great wish. There is nothing else you could do for me."

She said the last few words in a low, shy tone, which penetrated to Robert's heart. He resolved in himself to insure some means of seeing her again, even if she spoke only of this subject so utterly distasteful to him, and of which she spoke with such simple and innocent candour.

"Hester," he said, "I will take up this search again. But, remember, it is now nine years ago, and there is barely a chance of success."

"Oh, you will find her!" she exclaimed, holding

out her hand to him again; "whatever she is, or wherever she is, you must rescue her. It will bring peace to me, and later, perhaps, to my father. When he comes to die, how horrible it will be not to know where she is, or what has befallen her! But if you find her, then I shall know what answer to give him when he asks himself, some day or other, 'What has become of my poor Rose?'"

"I will go—I will spare nothing," said Robert, warmed by one of the generous impulses which from time to time broke through the indolent selfishness of his temperament. He believed that there was no other motive at work within him, save one of earnest desire to repair the mischief he had done; yet he kept Hester's small hand clasped tightly in his own, and felt it impossible to resolve upon leaving her presence.

"I must leave you, madame," he said, addressing the old Frenchwoman; "I am about to start for your dear France, but I shall return in three or four weeks, and, if you will permit me, I will pay you an early visit.—" Hester," he added in English, "it will be necessary to tell you all I do. Can I write to you safely? Will your father see my letter?"

"You can write to me," she answered; "my father will know nothing about it. Good-bye."

"Good-bye, little Hetty," he replied; "say, 'God speed you, Robert Waldron.'"

"God speed you," repeated Hester, with a glance into his eyes which made his heart throb again. He laid his moustached lip against each smooth cheek of madame, with an air of gallantry as exquisitely refreshing to her as cold water to a thirsty soul; and, with a last look at Hester, he hastened from the poor garret and down the stairs, as if the next instant should see him on his way to Southampton, the nearest route to France.

CHAPTER THE TWENTY-SEVENTH. DISAPPOINTMENT.

HE did start as soon as he could make such arrangements as would not involve confiding the reason of his expedition to his father. He had no wish to make him acquainted either with his recent intercourse with Hester, or the mission she had sent him abroad for. This mission was so utterly distasteful to him, that but a little more painfulness would have made him abandon it altogether. It was like raking among the ashes of the dead to reconstruct a skeleton. The one point of attraction in the whole of his present course of action was the tie gradually formed by it between himself and Hester. He wrote to her frequently, and looked forward to another half-stolen interview with her upon his return. Three or four times also she wrote to him.

The quest made by Robert Waldron was, as he

expected, utterly fruitless, as far as its immediate object was concerned. He could discover no satisfactory trace of Rose, though he stayed in Normandy several weeks longer than he had at first intended, urged by Hester to make sure that he left no means untried. At last he returned to England without announcing his intention of doing so to her, and at once paid a visit to the garret of Madame Lawson. After his purposeless and impulsive nature, he resolved to see and know more of Hester, without looking forward to any result from such an intercourse except the agreeable distraction from ennui which it afforded him.

Madame Lawson understood him better than he understood himself; and all her inherent love of intrigue, which had been starving for lack of food in England, revived in full force. She knew very well that a monsieur so distinguished, and so handsome, did not pay his visits to her garret out of pure kindness to an exile. By dexterous questions she ascertained his position and his wealth. He even confided to her the history of his early fault.

She could see no reason whatever why this rich and great milord should not eventually love and be loved by Hester. In fact, it was a beautiful little turn of the wheel by which the wrong that had been committed might be redressed. She very willingly let him know when he might find Hester at her place.

Robert took care to be there the very first time Hester paid madame a visit after his return. But she was not a second time to be taken by surprise. She greeted him calmly and collectedly, and listened to his account of his journeyings with a grave and downcast face, while he spoke to her almost in a whisper, lest any word should reach other ears than her own. When his narrative was ended, and she looked more sad than before, Robert Waldron could no longer keep back a question which had been all the time upon his mind.

"What could you do, Hester?" he asked; "you could not see her for yourself."

"Not see her!" echoed Hester, with a sudden flame of passion upon her quiet face—"not see her! Why should I see you, and refuse to speak to her? Why should I let you touch my hand, and hold it back from her? I would go to her to-day, if I only knew where she was."

"You do not know what the world would say," said Robert Waldron.

"I believe I know what Christ would think," she murmured. The momentary fire of indignation and protest died out, and she leaned her face upon her hands and wept long and bitterly, with tears of mingled disappointment and longing. It was the first time that the world's opinion had been in any shape thrust upon her. In her own dreams of fresh romance and enthusiastic religion, she had seen no obstacle whatever to her scheme for seeking out and

rescuing her lost step-mother, whenever an opportunity should occur. And now this sudden check came from *him*! She wept so long and hopelessly that Robert Waldron was almost beside himself.

"Hetty," he said, "I will do whatever you bid me. I will go back again, and come here no more unless I find her, if you desire it. But there is no chance of discovering her. I assure you most solemnly I have done all I can; yet I will go back again."

"No, no," she answered, "you must not leave your father a second time on a useless errand. But I have had nothing else to think of all these years, and now it is all over. I only wish we knew that she was dead!"

Robert Waldron echoed the wish ardently in his heart, but he did not utter it. Perhaps she might be dead; but he had never attempted to establish that point. He resolved now to put this question afloat, and see what response he could get to it.

"I have thought of one other thing I can do," he said, "and it shall be done quickly. When may I see you again?"

"I come here often," she answered with wistful eagerness; "this is the only place where I dare meet with you. My father must never know it."

Hester had been so long sole mistress and arbitress of her own actions, that there was no element either of disobedience or concealment in the arrangement she had just suggested. It was merely to shield her father from the disquietude and pain of hearing Robert Waldron's name spoken in any connection, that she appointed Lawson's garret as the only place where she could meet him. To have asked her father's opinion would have seemed utter folly and cruelty to her. As she spoke, her girlish ignorance of the world smote upon Robert's conscience, but his generosity was not equal to the sacrifice. He must see her again—why, he scarcely knew, but to forego the stolen and prohibited delight was impossible to him.

"I will see you again in a few days," he said, in a measured voice which betrayed no emotion.

He stayed no longer, but went away, leaving madame to praise her new and powerful patron. The old Frenchwoman was wary, and perfectly comprehended the rôle she had to play. She would keep his secret, and aid his meeting with Hester to the utmost of her power. To this end she maintained a careful silence about Robert Waldron to her son, who never returned from the workshop until late in the evening, long after Hester had gone home, and when there was no chance of his visits.

John Morley in his dark den, where he brooded over his long, sad, selfish dream of sorrow, had no idea that his daughter was in direct and personal communication with Robert Waldron. He was receiving some very material shocks to his pro-

found inattention to business; for his affairs were daily becoming more and more involved, and his creditors more pressing. In these troubles Hester had to bear more than her full share, and whenever her thoughts turned from their old sorrow, they had nothing to occupy them but this new one. It

was a relief to go and see the gay old woman, whose cheerful songs and laughter stirred her heart to something of girlish merriment; and Robert Waldron's occasional presence there added another interest, amounting to an attraction, to her visits.

END OF CHAPTER THE TWENTY-SEVENTH.

MOONLIGHTING CATTLE.



T was a dry season—word of fear only known in its true meaning to an Australian squatter. The sun had licked up the few remaining spots of muddy water, scorched the grass, and turned everything but the bare earth to a sort of rusty blue. The plains, filled with great cracks and holes, and destitute of a vestige of any green thing, had been scraped and trodden by the starving sheep till they looked like fresh-dug flower-beds, and the thunderstorms which mocked us on the horizon every night, were only too sure signs that this sort of thing might last for months yet. What with the shepherds giving up their flocks in despair, or, worse still, losing them for want of energy to walk round them, I had had a hard time of it; night after night out riding one tired and starved horse after another, shifting sheep stations, sinking holes in the river-bed, trying to keep some life in the wretched stock that staggered and tottered along across the dusty plain, followed by some cranky, dejected shepherd, whose whole soul was bent on the calculation of how soon his time would be up, and himself at liberty to go and drink his cheque at the public-house in the township two hundred miles off.

The wild cattle, brutes that had nearly lived long enough to have forgotten the hot iron on their sides, and that laughed to scorn all attempts to head them to the yard, had long been a nuisance on the run. They had by long impunity so increased that the scrubs round Mount Breakneck were full of them, and their numbers were always being recruited by stragglers from the quiet cattle of the place, which, in these dry times, often wandered a dozen miles from their own camps to look for better pasture, or followed the beds of the dried-up creeks, scraping up the sand in the faint hope of coming on the water which, even in the worst seasons, is generally found running below.

It was just Christmas time, and in consequence steaming hot. The thermometer registered over 100 in the verandah of the "Coburn Humpy," or squatter's house, which, built of weather-board and raised from the ground on piles, was, except perhaps the huge wool-shed lower down the creek, the coolest place for many miles. We, that is the

cattle overseer and myself, in our little bachelors quarters, had been trying in defiance of flies, mosquitoes, and the tarantula spiders that disported themselves on the rafters, to sleep all day, and to fancy that we were enjoying our Christmas; and, in default of anything else, had been brewing large jorums of lime-juice and water, to drink the healths of divers people who were at that moment snoring peacefully beneath the bed-clothes under the influence of Christmas cheer at home, while big coal fires glowed in their bed-rooms, and the landscape was cold, and white under its load of snow.

Jack, after moralising on his hard fate, and describing the dances that his people always had on Christmas Eve, was suddenly brought back to a practical sense of the duties of this life, by the black bullock-driver putting his head in at the window and saying, "Hi! plenty me been see um cattle! big fellow mob! that been come down along o' water this side little fellow myall scrub. I believe me and you go look out that fellow."

Now the gentleman who condescended to take our fat cattle at four pounds per head, and who retailed them to the good people of Sydney at fourpence per pound, had been grumbling fearfully about their quality lately, and had even threatened to transfer his custom to our next neighbour, between whom and us there was war and much chaff, so that a chance of getting a really prime lot for Christmas was not to be despised. And if, after we had got them, they were found to be too wild to drive to market, that was the butcher's look-out—nay, might even put a pound or two into some of the very empty pockets of my mates and myself, for seeing them safe over the range which was the particular bane of all drovers, with its precipitous track, and the prickly scrub which ran right into the road. At least, it was something to relieve the eternal monotony of counting two flocks of sheep, morning and evening, and we were equal to the occasion.

Springing off the bed and putting a spur on the right boot, while my mate put the other on his left—an ingenious and wholly Australian way of dividing our forces—and rolling up the sleeves of our, to say the truth, not very clean flannel shirts, we dispatched Quondong, our black friend, for the working horses, and making the courtyard re-echo to the sound of our stock-whips, gave the signal for

the stock-men to turn out, put their blankets on their saddles, and, with many growls and much lighting of pipes, swagger down to pick out something that had still a little flesh on its bones, to carry them to the camp we proposed making that night at Hungry Jack's Gully, some eight or ten miles away.

The only water-hole accessible to the wild cattle was separated from the scrub by a mile of level plain, cut and gashed by the sun's heat into a thousand holes and fissures; and the cattle, as soon as darkness concealed their movements, used to steal across this, following stealthily in one another's wake like Indians on the war-path; and, having drunk enough to last them till next night, would scamper back again across the plain till they gained the friendly shelter of the scrub; and these sorties into an enemy's country must at least have had the charm of excitement in them, as the least sound, such as the distant gallop of a mob of wild horses, or a 'possum scuttling up a tree, was quite sufficient to entail a headlong *sauve qui peut* of about a mile at racing pace. The only thing to be done with these brutes, whose every faculty was sharpened by thirst and aided by the unnatural stillness of the bush, was to get a lot of, say a hundred, quiet cattle and post them inside the scrub down-wind, and do our best to drive the wild ones in to them, and then trust to luck and good horsemanship to keep them.

And so, in about an hour from the first alarm, we found ourselves well on to the plains, driving our wretched "coaches," as they are called, before us by the last rays of a red lurid sun, which threatened to sink suddenly behind Mount Breakneck, and leave us to the mercy of the Southern Cross or any other friendly stars, to show us the way to where our little bush-yard of strong saplings lay, far up in a secluded glen, as our base of operations.

Every man mounted on a stout little horse of about fifteen hands, in a big ring snaffle, blanket strapped across the saddle, quart pot and hobbles hanging behind, and short pipe in mouth, we rode along, keeping close to our rather refractory charge.

Crawling through the belt of myall, whose drooping branches fringed the scrub, and carefully threading the tall pines that lay behind—guided always by the black fellow, whose eyes seemed only to begin to be in their element as the darkness drew in, and who was mounted on an old white horse, celebrated in all that country-side for his high qualities in scrub-riding—we at last reached our little sapling yard, and throwing down the rails put our coaches inside; and after watching their attempts to knock it down or jump over till they found it was hopeless, we lit a fire behind, and putting on the quart pots in the ready blaze of small sticks and bark, made our frugal supper of tea, damper, and very salt beef.

There were eight of us, all told: my mate Jack

B——, the overseer; two stock-men, great authorities on all matters of bush life; three of those nondescript, straight-haired, slab-sided lads who seem to have been born in moleskin breeches and cabbage-tree hats, and who unite the most reckless courage on horseback with a calmness of philosophy, and a grim humour, only to be found in the backwoods of America or the Australian bush; your humble servant myself, and last, but by no means least, Quondong, the black tracker, a half-civilised darkey, whose whole life was spent in seeing things utterly invisible to a white man, the faintest trace of any living beast being to him an open book to be read at a gallop. We drew lots with pieces of stick as to who should keep awake, walk round the yard occasionally, and wake the rest of the party when the moon rose. Close at hand two 'possums kept up a wordy warfare, jumping from branch to branch, and spitting and chattering like two cats; every now and then the faint cry of the "Morepork," the Australian night cuckoo, came softly out of the intensely black scrub behind me; while far away in front, through a gap in the pine-trees, I could see Mulally Plain stretching into the distance.

Having secured and saddled up our horses as quietly as possible, we threw aside the slip-rails of our yard, and let the coaches draw out, led and kept back by Quondong, and went silently down a mile or two to where the myall again began to fringe the edge of the plain. Here we stationed our two boys in as open a place as we could find, behind a thick patch of prickly "mulga," and leaving the cattle in their charge, followed each other silently along the outer edge of the scrub, the trees still keeping us in shadow of the moon's slanting rays.

Presently we came to one of the beaten tracks used by the wild cattle on their midnight expeditions to the water; and Quondong, jumping down and carefully examining the recent hoof-marks, informed us that a mob had only just gone down, amongst which several large tracks showed the presence of the much-desired fat bullocks.

Silence was now the word; our hobble-chains were tightly secured, so that they should not rattle; and even our pipes were put out, so that the cattle, whose noses get as keen as red-deer's, should suspect nothing till we had had time to see them first, and form our plans for surrounding them.

Suddenly a halt, and a few hurried words from old Jack, and we found ourselves within a couple of hundred yards of a mob, that had already heard us, and were now all together in a close ring with their heads up, waiting for the boldest to begin his dash to the scrub.

Now was our time. Sitting close to our saddles, and cramming our hats on our heads, we darted at them in single file, and, ringing them up as close as we could jam them together, set them galloping in

a circle contrary to our own, till the poor brutes were so confused that they did not know in which direction the scrub lay. Every now and then one would charge headlong out of the dense mass, but by the time he had made up his mind which horseman to attack, another would have taken his place, the superior speed of our horses enabling us to keep the pace up in a much larger circle than the cattle could manage; and yet we almost brushed their horns in our mad gallop, and still kept circling on in the half-light, looking neither to the right nor left, but only intent on keeping our circle unbroken.

I know many exciting things in life—the first start from a cover, with a good fox running straight, and a jealous field all riding for a start—the last few yards of a long and weary stalk to a royal stag, when your hand trembles, and a hot and cold perspiration breaks out all over you alternately—the finish of a well-rowed boat-race; but I can confidently recommend to any one who has never tried it, the excitement that springs from a knowledge that the slightest mistake of your horse will bring an infuriated mob of cattle over your devoted head, while you still keep galloping madly after a flying figure whose hat, blown back off his head, flaps and flaps in front of you, with his head down, and himself sticking to the saddle like wax, his little horse scattering the black earth behind him; and by your side a moving panorama of snorting heads and flashing eyes, with a fattle of the long horns that would instantly be down upon you, if you allowed them a moment's breathing time.

But this cannot last; the pace is too good, and Jack's wary eye has already shown him that the cattle, for the present at all events, are his own. With a dexterous sweep he puts himself at the head of the mob, and, without once stopping to form line, we seem to fall by instinct into our places, and by the light of the moon, now rising in all its glory, thunder across the plain towards the coaches, looking like an army of phantoms, as no one speaks, and no sound is heard but the steady gallop of our game little horses, and the heavy labouring breath of our captives, that find the pace a little too hot for them. But they have not time to stop. Before we can realise it we are upon the tame cattle, which have been silently brought as near to us as possible by the boys in charge, and, shifting round the other side, we await the charge of the new-comers, that often try to force their way straight through the little herd, and break away on the other side; but here the coaches themselves come to our assistance. Uneasy at being off their own camp, and thoroughly out of temper with the whole thing, they meet the charge of the strangers gallantly, and, with hoarse grumbings, close round them, till, what with the confusion of their ideas, and their curiosity as to what has brought all these other beasts on to their domain, they give

it up as a bad job, and in half an hour's time are a mile or two from their own haunts, and ready themselves to act as coaches for fresh victims.

And now, having recovered our equanimity, we scrutinise our captives, and find ten fat bullocks among them—old rascals that have lived with impunity through a life longer than is appointed to bullocks, and whose hides bear a big "A. T.," the brand of the previous owner.

I think I need not describe all the expeditions we made that night—how "Scrub Bill" and his mate Tommy both got falls in the treacherous melon-holes, and how, my girth breaking suddenly, I found myself sitting disconsolately on the plain, with a good pigskin saddle between my legs, and the tail of old "Schemer," that had carried me so well, vanishing in the darkness, to the sound of many trampling hoofs. Every raid we made into the enemy's country was successful, and we found ourselves masters of some seventy or eighty beasts, which we had now to steer to the station.

Cattle-driving has a peculiar charm. The old moss-troopers, who used to scour the border-country for cattle, as they pricked along with their spears a good fat lot, belonging to some Northumbrian farmer, must have felt much the same as we did, warily watching our hard-won charge; although we indeed had stock-whips instead of spears, a decided advantage in cattle-driving, for it would take a good long spear to get within reach of an Australian scrubber.

All round us were troops of wild mares and foals, in much the same state as the cattle, in companies of twenty or thirty together, each constituting the harem of some old horse, that would allow them to approach within two hundred yards of us, and then dashing in between, with his long mane and tail flying in the wind, would round them up and drive them before him like a flock of sheep, stopping every now and then to trot a little nearer to us, and snort, and strike the ground in defiance of our steeds.

And now away in the distance we see the dim shadowy line of the head-station creek-trees, raised by the mirage above the line of the true horizon, and looking like a faint cloud hanging in mid-air. Lower and lower it drops as we approach, till it joins the earth, and the huge zinc roof of the woolshed begins to glitter in the rays of the sun.

In another half-hour the massive rails of the stock-yard, closing behind our charge, give us good security for their safe keeping; and breakfast, with its hot tea and fried steaks, makes up for our frugal supper of the night before.

There! it looks simple enough on paper, but let me tell you that if you have a tolerable seat on a horse, have as many spare necks as other people, and want to combine amusement with profit, there are worse ways of spending a night than "moon-lighting cattle."

ONCE A COWARD.



"DUCIE STOPPED HER."

IN TWO CHAPTERS.—CHAPTER THE FIRST.

IT was one evening after we had come in from shooting that she said it. I remember that. I remember also how cheerily the library window at the old Hall gleamed out to welcome us, making a ruddy stain on the wet gravel. Didn't it look cosy too, after a long tiring day spent in tramping through

heavy turnip-fields and stiff wet stubble! And yet there was a cosier thing than that before us soon.

My cousin Helen's face!

It beamed out on us, a lovely picture framed in the dark, heavily carved doorway, a bright glowing face set against a bright glowing background like

the portrait of some mediæval saint ; a glorious face always, but when, as now, bringing the full light of its moist blue eyes, and flushed sweet smiles, to bear on its fellow-creatures, utterly irresistible.

One of our party, Ducie of Enderbean, did not attempt to resist it. So completely indeed had that gentleman fallen under my cousin's yoke that I daily expected to hear that, out of sheer gratitude for his worship, the young lady had promised to return him that "love, honour, and obedience" which we find mentioned in the Common Prayer Book ; nor would the tidings have displeased me. I don't know how it would have been if I had wished to marry Helen myself ; but when a fellow has got a dear little girl of his own waiting for him he can afford to be magnanimous about his cousins.

De plus, Ducie was one of my dearest friends ; one of those men who manage to carry away every heart, male and female, in sort of Saxon Apollo.

He turned into the library at once, saying something to Helen as he passed her, which made the flush deepen pinkly on her fair cheeks ; and Tom Jackson and I followed. Cis Devereux slipped up-stairs to dress. He was too great a dandy to present himself to the fair sex under the disadvantages of rumpled locks and muddy leggings.

Looking at Ducie I fancied the said disadvantages made him rather more handsome than usual. I wonder if he knew it. The girls did, for they accepted most amiably his apologies for our intrusion in such guise (Tom Jackson said "as such guys !"), and declared that we might have a full half-hour to toast in front of the fire before going up to dress for dinner.

I fancy it was Devereux's absence which turned the conversation on him. Jackson never could bear him, and said so adding, like the broad, outspoken Yorkshireman he was, that the fellow had no more courage than a rabbit ; "actually winced every time a gun went off near him."

One of the girls rather objected to this ; but Mary Jackson took her brother's part, and gave us an amusing instance of Devereux's want of courage in some mountain adventure they had enjoyed together. She made us all laugh by the way she told it ; and it was then Helen exclaimed, with a scornful curl of her pretty lip—

"I am sorry you told us. I never liked Captain Devereux, but I detest a coward."

Girls, when of impetuous dispositions, sometimes use much stronger expressions than they have any idea of. The bitter word *coward*, flung like a shot into the middle of our little group by a girl, produced a momentary silence ; and I began to feel annoyed with my fair cousin for forgetting that Devereux was our guest, and to meditate giving her a private lecture.

To my unutterable surprise, Ducie saved me the trouble by taking the reins into his own hands, and

bringing up the spirited offender with a jerk. He had been leaning against the mantelpiece, gazing down at her with a sort of dreamy admiration in his dark eyes ; but now he straightened himself as suddenly as if the shot had struck him, and spoke in a dry, hard tone, which must have been quite new to his beautiful young hostess.

"Do you think that is a fair term to apply to the gentleman in question, Miss Curtis ?"

Helen stared. She was not used to rebukes from her lovers, and instantly resented this one by as dry and hard an answer.

"After what Miss Jackson has just told us? Yes, Mr. Ducie, I do."

"Then I think you are very wrong, if you will allow me to say so."

"You do not wait to be allowed—" Helen began haughtily ; then flushed up and softened, like a regular woman, into a personal appeal. "But I could hardly make allowance even for you, Mr. Ducie, whom we know to be a brave man, if you did not hate cowardice at least as much as I do."

"I do—*hate* cowardice," he answered, with an unwonted emphasis which struck us all. "So much so, that I do not like even to hear the word applied to a man who probably does not deserve it."

"But if he does ?"

"You have no proof that Captain Devereux does."

"Not Mary's story? Oh, Mr. Ducie!" (getting angry again, and her blue eyes flashing impatiently), "you cannot bring me to look at bad things with simple indifference. The word may be ugly, the thing is much uglier ; and not even your eloquence" (very scornfully) "could make me regard a coward with any feelings but pity and contempt."

Did you ever see a picture (it was in the Academy some years ago) of Mary of Scotland turning on the rebel lords who have come to extort her signature to the deed of abdication? Do you remember the look of unutterable scorn with which she bares her white arm, bruised black with the grip of Ruthven's mailed fingers? Helen Curtis looked like the outraged queen just then, as she sat erect in her low chair, her eyebrows raised, her ripe lips curved in a beautiful scorn. Ducie, white as death, looked at her steadily, his hands clenched behind his back, but made no reply. I thought of the *Taming of the Shrew*, and wondered whether Ducie was deciding with Hortensio, "Kindness in women, not their beauteous looks, shall win my love." Mary Jackson, whose giddy tongue had provoked the quarrel, rose uncomfortably, saying it must be time to dress, and fluttered away, Tom Jackson and his pretty wife following.

Then, to my great joy, Helen, seeing herself left alone, rose to depart likewise, and was turning to the door when Ducie stopped her.

"One word," he said, speaking with a sort of

forced calmness. "Putting this nonsensical story of Miss Jackson's on one side, would you call a man a coward because his courage had failed him signally in one solitary instance?"

I bit my lip. I saw Helen was on her mettle, and indeed her answer proved me right.

"Decidedly I should. I judge a man's heart by what he does, not by what he says; and the more sudden the call, the more surely he acts according to his natural instincts. One greater than you or I said of his disciples, 'By their fruits ye shall know them,' and I—when I see a man do a cowardly act—I know he must be a coward at heart. You are making yourself special pleader in a very bad cause, Mr. Ducie. Pray let us drop the subject. You forget" (drawing up her head like an offended queen) "that my father died before Lucknow, and therefore it is not likely that his daughter should have any sympathy for a coward."

"I am sorry for it," he said gravely. "I should have thought the fact carried its own punishment heavily enough without—Miss Curtis, it wants ten minutes yet to the dressing-bell. May I tax your patience for half that time while I tell you a story?"

"Certainly," she said, and sat down again with a little air of offended surprise.

I made a movement to go, observing that I always knew Ducie was an uncommonly brave fellow, but now I had a higher opinion than ever of his courage, since I saw him venture to brave so very fiery a young lady as my cousin.

She smiled and blushed a little at this, drooping her face like a lovely pink lily. He only made a gesture to stay me, and said—

"I would rather you remained, Fred. You compliment me by calling me a brave fellow. Miss Curtis paid me a similar compliment just now. I—but I will tell you my story, and then *you* shall tell me what you would call the hero, and whether you could have any kind feelings for such a person."

He spoke to me, but his eyes were on Helen; and I saw her whiten and flinch as if some one had threatened her with a blow.

Like a fool I never guessed the reason why.

"Two years ago," Ducie said, "a friend of mine and his servant were travelling in South America. The former went abroad for his health—not that he was ill when the anecdote I am going to tell you took place. You will please not make that excuse for him—he was perfectly well; and he took his servant with him because the lad was so attached to him, such a faithful, true-hearted fellow that he could not make up his mind to leave him behind. It was scorching hot weather, such heat as you may expect in a country which lies on the southern border of Brazil; and my friend used to go every morning to bathe at the Playa Ramirez, a large unsheltered bay about a mile and a half from the

town. A beautiful stretch of sand it was, the best bathing-place in the neighbourhood; and yet a very dangerous one; for if you went outside a certain number of yards you were liable to get entangled in one of two or three conflicting currents, which in a dead calm you could see curling about within each other like harmless sea-serpents; but which, if they caught you in their strong embrace, would assuredly carry you out into the Atlantic, unless you happened to be a strong and clever swimmer.

"Well, one morning my friend and John Barton, his servant, went to bathe as usual about seven o'clock—a late hour in those climates, Miss Curtis, where most people start at five, and where the sun is almost strong enough to roast the brains in your head by eight. As a natural consequence they found themselves alone at the playa, having met most of the Montevideans returning. All the better. Englishmen are not fond of publicity, as you're aware.

"My friend went in first, leaving Barton to watch his clothes, lest any of the small fry from the negro hamlet of washerwomen above the bay should come down and appropriate the articles; and when he had sufficiently refreshed himself and emerged on to the sands again, Barton went in for a similar enjoyment.

"It could not possibly have been five minutes later. He had barely got into his clothes when he heard a piercing shriek from the water, and turning, saw that Barton had disappeared. The next moment, however, the lad's head rose to the surface about a dozen yards from the shore, and he cried out, 'Master, help! The cramp! Help!' before going down again like a stone.

"Of course you think the master dashed in and dragged him out. It was not much to do for this faithful fellow who had served him so well, and left his home and friends rather than leave him. He did no such thing.

"He hesitated, and his limbs turned to ice, and every drop of blood in his body to water. Like a wave there rushed over him the thought that he could not swim a stroke, that he was encumbered with his clothes, that Barton was a stronger man than himself, that once in the current with a drowning man's clutch at his neck, they must both inevitably be swept out to sea and perish. It was only a moment; then the lad's head rose again. For one second his eyes caught his master's face in a look of wild, despairing appeal; and, maddened by the situation, my friend rushed—not into the water, but up the bank, shrieking for help to the men who drive the sand-carts along the brow of the bay.

"Before he had gone two yards—before they even heard him, Barton sank for the third time and—all was over.

Sheer physical fear, a spasm of unconquerable cowardice which he had never felt before in his

whole life, and which, finding him utterly unprepared for it, completely over-mastered the man's entire nature, had in that one miserable minute cost the life of his faithful servant, and darkened his own for ever.

"There's not much more to tell you. It was just the turn of the tide. Within twenty minutes of the affair, the waves flung poor Barton's dead body within reach of the man who might have tried to save his life, and did not. The 'peons' helped him to carry it up the bank and lay it on the sand-

cart, to bring it into town. I believe it was buried decently next day. They told me so; but before then I was ill, raving with a sunstroke which——"

"You!" The word leapt from my lips in a cry of horror. "Ducie! you don't mean that you have told us of—that *you* were that——"

He turned and looked me in the face.

"Yes, Fred, *I was that man*; I, whose 'pluck' people are so fond of praising."

There was a dead silence.

END OF CHAPTER THE FIRST.

KIDNAPPERS AND KIDNAPPING.



IT is probable that kidnapping, though no science of it, so far as we know, was ever thought of, has been practised as an art from very early times; and, although we may not believe with Dr. Lemprière that the boy Ganymede was ever pounced upon by an eagle, to become the cup-bearer of Jove in the heavenly regions, or even that Romulus and Remus, and Cyrus, were actually carried off by their respective grandfathers in the hopes that they would meet with an early death like the "Babes in the Wood," there can be little doubt that in every country where children prove a source of wealth, and not of poverty, there have been found persons who, if they had the chance, would carry them off and make merchandise of them. Such for instance has been the case too often, and to far too great an extent, in the dealings of the white man—yes, even the European and the Englishman—with the black and the slave.

But even in our own enlightened country such deeds of robbery have not been uncommon; and the law-books of England will serve to show that child-stealing has been included in the list of crimes to which the heaviest penalties were attached. We must leave antiquaries to inform us what was the punishment of kidnappers among the civilised nations of antiquity; merely remarking that under the old Jewish law it was punishable by death (see Exodus xxi. 16), while the same penalty was inflicted by the Civil Law on *plagiarii*, or those who spirited away or stole children. The Common Law of England more mercifully used to punish it, as Blackstone tells us, with fine, imprisonment, and the pillory. Since his time, however, the pillory has been abolished; and now, by the 9th of George IV., any one who may kidnap or carry off by force or fraud a child under ten years of age, for the purpose of depriving its parents of such child, or of depriving the child of its clothing, may be sentenced to nothing worse than seven years' transportation, or to two years' imprisonment with hard labour and a whipping.

One of the earliest instances of kidnapping on record is that of the great saint of Ireland, Patrick, of whom—albeit he was "born of decent people"—we read that when he was a boy he was suddenly carried off from his father's farm, either on the banks of the Clyde or near Boulogne, by a band of pirates, who took him to Ireland, where they sold him as a slave to a petty chief, from whom on reaching manhood he managed to make his escape.

Another touching tale of mediæval kidnapping is still told in connection with the ruins of Orford Castle, on the coast of Suffolk. Some five or six centuries ago, in one of its dark and dismal and now ruinous apartments, a "ladye of high degree" was confined during the absence of her lord, who, like a good knight and true, had accompanied King Richard to the Holy Land. She gave birth to a beautiful babe, a boy, who in the temporary absence of his nurse was seized by stealth and carried off by some freebooters, who had landed close to the castle walls under the guise of Flemish merchants. The "ladye" fretted and pined away; and her lord returned from the East only just in time to weep over her bier, and to die of a broken heart—the loss of his wife and child being a far heavier blow than the stroke of the sword of the Saracen. What became of the child is not known; at all events local tradition is wholly silent as to his recovery in after time.

The most remarkable, though not the earliest, instance of child-stealing in Ireland, I must own—like that of St. Patrick—is somewhat mythical; but everything in that country happens after so strange a fashion, that I am half inclined to try my hand at an "Irish bull," and say that the earliest instance of a person running off with an infant is to be found in the Lives of the Fitzgeralds, Earls of Offaley. The story runs that the lords' castle being in flames, an ape ran off with the infant heir who lay asleep in his cradle, and carried him safely to the battlements beyond the reach of the fire. An admirable and excellent ape indeed, and one whose trick of kidnapping must be regarded as a virtue rather than a crime, as is shown by the

fact that the Fitzgeralds, now Dukes of Leinster as well as Earls of Offaley, in *gratiam rei memoriam* still bear "two apes proper" as supporters of their family arms, and also an ape or monkey for their crest. The heralds, however, who gave these arms must have been rather ignorant of natural history, as they have given the Fitzgerald ape a "caudal appendage."

We pass on without apology to the days of our grandfathers. My readers will scarcely have forgotten the annual feast which the celebrated Mrs. Montague used to give to the chimney-sweepers of London on May-day, upon the lawn before her house in Portman Square. It is not generally known that this celebration took its rise in a case of kidnapping which occurred—not to one of her children, for she never had any, but to some member of her own or of her husband's family. It is said that the boy whose restoration she thus commemorated was stolen by chimney-sweepers when only three or four years old, and was brought back unintentionally to the house by some members of the sooty confraternity, when sent for to sweep the chimneys of her town mansion. If so, the only wonder is that none of our modern versifiers have seized on the incident as the subject of a poem.

Again, in the month of November, 1811, half London was startled by the news that a little boy, named Dellow, the son of respectable parents in the City, had been spirited away by a well-dressed woman from the shop of Mary Cox, greengrocer and fruiterer, in Martin's Lane, Cannon Street, close to Fish Street Hill and the Monument. He had been left with his little sister in the shop by his mother for a few minutes, while she went next door to call on a surgeon. The little girl returned shortly, with an apple and a cake in her hand, which she said had been given to her by the kind lady "who had taken her brother back to mamma."

An alarm was at once raised. The Lord Mayor issued a proclamation, offering a large reward to the finder of the child; and, as the dress of the woman who treated the children was minutely described, one female, at least, was arrested and tried, on the charge of having kidnapped the boy. Fortunately she was able to prove an alibi, and so was acquitted, though the circumstantial and direct evidence seemed to point strongly against her; and shortly afterwards the real culprit turned out to be one Harriet Magnis, of Gosport, the wife of a gunner in the Royal Navy, who was particularly anxious to become a papa, and if possible the papa of a boy. Madame Magnis, too, desired to indulge her husband in his not unreasonable wish, and resolved to get hold of a little boy by hook or by crook. Having some sense in her head, she thought that London would prove the best hunting-ground for stray children.

It appears that on hearing from his beloved wife that she expected to become a mamma, the husband sent her home three hundred pounds from abroad, with a promise of more to come, and a request that the little stranger should be "well rigged." It appears too that, having reached London, she went straight to St. Paul's and the Monument Yard, where, seeing the little boy playing with his sister on the steps of the greengrocer's shop, she tempted both of them to a pastry-cook's, from which she got clear off with the boy, leaving the girl to find her mamma as best she could. Mrs. Magnis was arrested at Gosport, and tried at Winchester; but in the end she was acquitted, the legal Solomons agreeing that as the offence was committed in London, and not in Hampshire, the charge could not be sustained. However, though she was pronounced "not guilty," she was solemnly warned not to play the same trick again!

Seven years pass on, and early in the winter of 1818, just as the dark evenings commenced, Elizabeth Holbrook, the nursery-maid of Mr. and Mrs. Horsley, respectable residents of Islington, was sent out for a short walk with the two little children of her master. She had to draw them in a little chaise—for perambulators had not been then invented; but she and her young charges did not return, and, an hour after her disappearance, the little girl was found sitting quietly in her chaise, by a kind-hearted woman, the wife of a publican in the neighbourhood, who took her in and sheltered her till she should be owned. Hour after hour passed away, and still no tidings of either maid or children reached the Horsleys. The good people offered a reward, and made every inquiry from the Angel Inn to Canonbury Tower; and London was soon in a ferment of curiosity and wonder.

It turned out that, while walking with the children, Elizabeth had been seen in conversation with a young man of gentleman-like appearance, though somewhat shabbily dressed; and suspicion very naturally fell upon him. Putting two and two together, they concluded that the culprit was very probably Mrs. Horsley's cousin, one Charles Rennett, who had been disinherited by his and her grandfather, because his father had "made a bad match." He had a motive for hating the Horsleys. He had been heard to express a wish to do them a bad turn; and on a messenger being sent to his lodgings they were found empty. It seemed clear, therefore, that he was the kidnapper. Further inquiries revealed the fact that, a day or two before, a person answering his description, though under another name, accompanied by a little boy, had crossed the Channel from Dover to Calais.

The police were put on his track. He was traced into Belgium, where he was found by the aid of the British Consul and his wife, who had seen some

account of the lost child in the London papers. Charles Rennett was arrested, brought back to London, and tried at the Old Bailey. He excused his act on the ground that he had been ill-treated by his grandfather and the rest of the family, including the Horsleys themselves, who had profited by his father's exclusion from all share in his inheritance, and that he was only giving a "Rowland for an Oliver;" but this plea was of no avail. He was found guilty, and sentenced to seven years' transportation; but he did not live to complete his sentence.

In 1861, too, the son of a Mrs. Hill, a lady connected with the Burdett family, was carried off from Rugby by its own father, who, after falsifying the register of its birth, took it to London, and handed it over to some women whom he met in the street. The police were soon put upon the track of the culprits, who were shown to have received the missing infant from its unnatural parent. The papers took up the matter, which became a "nine days' wonder;" and in a little time the child was discovered at a low lodging-house in Lincoln Court, Drury Lane, a place tenanted by the lowest class of Irish. It was in a sadly dirty state, and such clothing as it had on its back was not the same which it wore on leaving Rugby; but in spite of dirt and rags there was something about the child which marked it off from the beggars' brats among whom it was playing, and its *distinguished* looks led to its recovery. Ultimately the father was acquitted of the charge on which he was arraigned. Both he and Mrs. Hill, however, died shortly afterwards, and the stolen boy is now a ward of the Court of Chancery.

Another instance of kidnapping that occurs to my memory will be fresh within the memory of many of my readers; but it is too circumstantial and full of incident to be omitted here.

On the afternoon of a fine spring day in 1869, Elizabeth Barry, a nurse in the service of Lieutenant-Colonel Hickie, left his residence in Kidwell's Park, Maidenhead, taking with her his infant daughter, aged about eighteen months. An alarm was raised, and the police were speedily sent in search; and a woman answering her description, and carrying a child, was traced by road as far as Hammersmith. It proved, however, that she was not Elizabeth Barry, who had proceeded by railway to London. Thence she travelled to Liverpool, where she went into lodgings in an obscure part of the town.

Although every publicity was given to the circumstances by the local and London press, and a reward of one hundred pounds offered, all efforts to discover the place of her retreat were unavailing, until, about ten days afterwards, the daughter of the lodging-house keeper, struck by the resemblance of the woman to the description in the advertisements,

communicated her suspicions to the police, when the woman was at once apprehended, the child being delivered to Major Gregg, the chief of the Liverpool police, who, curiously enough, happened to be an intimate friend of the afflicted parents. In a day or two more the child, whose clothes had been altered (not for the better), whose hair had been cut short, and who bore marks of serious ill-treatment, was restored to her parents, whose joy at her restoration may be easily conceived. Elizabeth Barry could give no reason whatever for the commission of this crime, and being tried for the offence at the ensuing Berkshire Quarter Sessions, received the very inadequate sentence of fifteen months' imprisonment.

It appears that during her stay in Liverpool she went to a Catholic priest, with a view to making him instrumental in restoring the child to her parents, and probably wishing him to negotiate for her own escape from punishment; but as she presented herself to him in a state of intoxication, and as he had not at the time heard of the loss of the child, he refused to listen to her story, which came by another channel to the ears of the police.

My readers will not care to have raked up the memories of the "Mortara" case, the "Vansittart" case, and other instances where young persons under age have been carried off by religious enthusiasts; but they will readily pardon me for reminding them of an example of the forcible abduction of a young lady of high connections, as illustrative of the way in which the upper class of Irishmen carry on their love affairs. It is a "rough-and-ready" process, but savours rather of kidnapping than of veritable love-making; and the chief agents in it must, I think, have been working under the auspices of Mars rather than of Venus.

Abduction has such a thoroughly Hibernian twang, that our readers will not be surprised to hear that it was in the sister island, quite lately, that a desperate attempt was made to "steal an heiress" of good family. The plans seem to have been carefully laid, for one day, as the lady in question was returning with two feminine companions from church, they were suddenly alarmed by the appearance of a rejected suitor for the lady's hand, with six men with knives and bludgeons, who seized the car, and after cutting the traces, forced the lady into a post-chaise and drove her off.

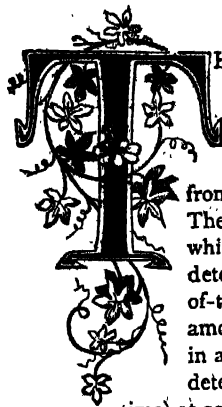
The servants came speedily to the rescue, and gave chase to the delinquents, who were all soon safely lodged in gaol, there to await their trial. They were ultimately sentenced to a fine and various terms of imprisonment. The young lady, who possessed a considerable fortune, is now happily married—but not to the gentleman in question.

E. WALFORD.

THE APPROACHING TRANSITS OF VENUS.

BY RICHARD A. PROCTOR, B.A. (CAMBRIDGE), HON. SEC. R.A.S.; AUTHOR OF "THE SUN," "OTHER WORLDS," ETC. ETC.

IN TWO PARTS.—PART THE SECOND.



THE great difficulty of Delisle's method resides in the fact that the observers have to compare the actual moments of the occurrence of events observed from opposite sides of the earth. They *must* know the true time at which the events occur; and the determination of true time, in out-of-the-way parts of the earth, is among the most difficult problems in astronomy. It is easy enough to determine true time (say Greenwich time) at some known station, as Plymouth, Liverpool, or Dublin; but it is quite another matter to determine it for Woahoo, or Kerguelen's Land, or some spot in the wilds of Tartary, or the icy deserts of Siberia. Yet these are among the places where the phenomena in question can be most readily observed during the transit of 1874.

With Halley's method the case is different. All that is wanted is a clock which will go truly enough during the hours of the transit to show the length of the line ab , or the line cd (Fig. 4), as the case may be.

But Halley's method is not always applicable with advantage. It involves this difficulty—the whole transit must be seen, whereas in Delisle's method only the beginning or end need be observed. And when a transit lasts six or seven hours, it is not always easy to find stations where not only will the whole transit be seen, but the sun be high above the horizon both at the beginning and end of the transit.

It may be said, indeed, that in every transit Delisle's method can be applied successfully, while it is only in a few cases that circumstances favour the application of the English method.

Passing therefore from Delisle's method, as certainly applicable both in 1874 and 1882, I propose to turn to the more interesting and critical question whether Halley's method can be applied in both cases or in either.

In 1874 the path of Venus is across the upper part of the solar disc, as shown in Fig. 4. In 1882 Venus transits the lower part of the disc. The slope and position of the two transit paths are as shown in the figure, the transit of 1882 occupying a longer time considerably than that of 1874.

Now let it first be noticed that the upper and lower paths differ from each other much more in

1874 than in 1882. This obviously is in favour of the earlier transit.

But next attend carefully to the following considerations.

We see from Fig. 1 (page 132) that the uppermost station, E, is that whence Venus is seen lowest down, so that in 1874 it is from a northerly station that Venus will follow the lowest course, cd (Fig. 4). She will be hastened, as we have said, by the effect of the earth's rotation, and being hastened along the longer of her two paths, she will not take so *much* longer a time in traversing it as she otherwise would. This is clearly unfavourable, for what is wanted is as great a difference of duration as possible. On the contrary, in 1882 she follows the shorter path, gh (Fig. 4), as seen from a northern station, and, being hastened along the shorter of her two paths, she will be a yet shorter time in traversing it. This is favourable, and in this important respect the transit of 1882 has an unquestionable advantage over the transit of 1874.

Now, for a southern station Venus may be either hastened or retarded according as we place the observer. The transit occurs in December, when there is no night at places near the south pole; and if we so choose our station that the transit occurs during the midday hours, Venus will be hastened; whereas if we so choose the station that the transit will occur during the nominal midnight hours, she will be retarded.

In 1874 the path she follows, as seen from a southern station, is placed as ab , or is the shorter path; therefore she should be hastened; and, accordingly, we must place an observer where the transit will occur during the midday hours at some antarctic station. This is readily managed. On the other hand, in 1882 she traverses the longer course, ef , and our object is therefore to retard her, so that, *if we can*, we must find a station where the transit will occur during the midnight hours. This is not so easy, because, though there is no night at antarctic stations tolerably near the pole on or about December 6th, the sun is very low near the midnight hours. As a matter of fact, this difficulty has proved insurmountable. No station can be found, in 1882, where the transit can be observed to advantage, simply because at the only known places near enough to the south pole, the sun would be far too close to the horizon, for the delicate phenomena of the entrance and exit of Venus to be seen as they should be. It may be

that such stations exist, but they are not known, and the idea of seeking for them has not been, or at least is not at present, entertained. Here, then, the transit of 1874 has the advantage over the transit of 1882.

Which transit, however, has the advantage on the whole?

For a long time it was thought that the transit of 1882 is the better for applying Halley's method. Indeed, the Astronomer-Royal, having pointed out in 1857 the disadvantage under which the earlier transit labours as respects northern standpoints for observation, gave up all thought of applying Halley's method on that occasion. He adopted the conclusion that the hastening of Venus quite cancels the lengthening of her path, as seen from northern stations in 1874; and no trace of any doubt as to the accuracy of the conclusion can be discerned in any paper subsequently written by him. But strangely enough, though the reasoning was accurate the conclusion was unsound. The hastening of Venus *does*, to a certain degree, reduce the duration of her transit, as seen from a northern station, but by no means to such a degree as to cancel the lengthening due to the position of *c d* (Fig. 4), as compared with *a b*. On the contrary, as I showed four years ago, and as is now confirmed by the authority of the *Nautical Almanack* for 1874, the duration of the transit, as seen from the northern station Nertchinsk, will exceed the mean duration by more than fifteen minutes, a very considerable period in such a problem as this (in fact, more than the shortening at the best northern stations in 1882).

At the southern station, in 1874, everything is favourable, and a shortening by fully sixteen and a half minutes can be obtained if an observing party is stationed at Possession Island—a place reached by Sir James C. Ross in 1845, and suitable (as we are told by experienced naval officers) for the purpose in view.

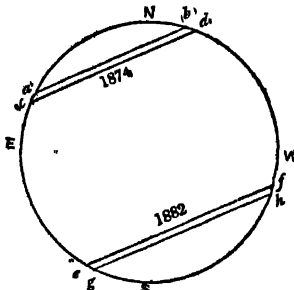


FIG. 4.

The point at present under discussion in the astronomical world is this: Shall the plans recommended to Government by Sir George Airy be so far changed as to include an expedition to some antarctic or sub-antarctic station? Russia is going to occupy Nertchinsk, as is manifestly her duty, since the place lies in Russian territory. But so far as Halley's method is concerned, a northern station is useless unless a southern station is also occupied. The only southern station which is to be occupied (for the application of Halley's method) is Kerguelen's Land, where the experienced naval officers above mentioned consider that the weather is likely to be unfavourable. Nor is Kerguelen's Land so well placed for the observation as Possession Island, and several other antarctic stations. It is as clearly the duty of this country to occupy Possession Island (her own discovery), as it is Russia's duty to occupy Nertchinsk. There is great reason for fearing, however, that this duty will be neglected, inquiry into the matter having been put off until it is almost too late to make suitable preparations. If this is so, England may have to be content with an inferior station.

In all other respects the transit will be well observed, if the weather is suitable at the principal stations. Great Britain is certainly taking her fair part in all those cases where stations are concerned which any country might occupy. She proposes to send observing parties to Alexandria, Rodriguez, Kerguelen's Land, Auckland, and Woahoo; while Lord Lindsay is preparing an expedition, at his sole charge, to Mauritius. But the noble opportunity afforded to this country of applying Halley's or the British method (at a station discovered by a British sailor), and thereby of obtaining the best means of determining the sun's distance available for the next hundred and thirty years, is likely to be lost, unless those who possess the power of influencing Government take time by the forelock, and act with energy.

HESTER MORLEY'S PROMISE.

BY HESBA STRETTON,

AUTHOR OF "THE DOCTOR'S DILEMMA," ETC. ETC.

CHAPTER THE TWENTY-EIGHTH.

MR. WALDRON'S WISH.

AT the close of the session Mr. Waldron bade farewell to his constituents, and resigned his seat in the House of Commons. It had been his wish that his son should take his place as the champion of Nonconformist interests; but it was very well

known that as yet Robert Waldron showed no proclivities towards Nonconformity, and there was little chance of his being elected by the borough which had known and trusted his father so long. Mr. Waldron still retained his mental vigour, and was disinclined to fall into the inactivity of old age; but his health was breaking, and he was too careful

of his life to risk it any further by his conscientious attendance to his Parliamentary duties. At home he had yet a post to fill as a landowner, a magistrate, and a member of the church at Little Aston, where he reigned with the absolute sway of a despot. He settled down as a country gentleman upon his estate at Aston Court, and found it upon

covered for Miss Waldron, who was already approaching a doubtful age, and had not yet seen any one who was in all respects worthy of a Miss Waldron. In furtherance of his own growing desire, Mr. Waldron urged Robert to think seriously of marriage; but when he replied by a request that his father would name the lady whom he would



"ABSORBED IN THE STUDY OF A BOOK."

the whole not unsuited to his taste. He had with him his two children. His son was the most affectionate, his daughter the most pious; he hardly knew which occupied the first place in his heart.

For Robert it was now his great desire to find a wife who would make a home for him, and secure himself from the dread of his son taking flight once more. The yearning of an old man to see his children's children playing about his knees took hold of him. But it was a question whether a husband of sufficiently eminent piety could be dis-

most willingly receive as his daughter-in-law, with a promise that he would then consider the matter, Mr. Waldron was at a loss. He ran over all the marriageable ladies in the neighbourhood, and found none that quite accorded with his own views.

"You ought to choose for yourself, Robert," he said, with a little ill-humour.

"I have no choice," answered his son meekly.

"Robert," he exclaimed the next Sunday night after his return from chapel, where he had refreshed himself during the singing of the hymns with re-

garding Hester's sweet devout face—"Robert, if the thing were not utterly impossible, I would rather have Hester Morley for my daughter-in-law than any other woman in the world."

Mr. Waldron deceived himself. It was this very impossibility which made it possible for him to think of the bookseller's daughter as his son's wife. A good deal of the natural pride of rank was subdued in him, but it was not altogether cast out.

Robert Waldron's ears tingled at the sound of this name uttered in such a connection; but he made no reply. It was, of course, a secret to his father that he had ever seen Hester for himself.

"She is exactly the creature that would have suited you," pursued Mr. Waldron—"lovely, refined, and modest; pious, too, for she is soon to become a member of the church.—You are satisfied with Hester Morley's state of mind, my dear?"

"Not altogether," replied Miss Waldron; "she is not open enough for me. I sometimes fear lest the root of the matter is not in her. But why are you talking about Hester Morley to Robert?"

Miss Waldron had but just entered the room, and her father shrank from communicating to her his first frank and inconsiderate utterance.

"I was merely alluding to her," he answered.

But, after this night, Mr. Waldron's mind often reverted to Hester. He looked into his own heart, and found that he had never given to any being out of his own family the love he felt for her. As for Robert, he set before himself the impossibility, the insurmountable obstacle, and gazed at it, and pondered over it, till it grew slowly less impossible, and less insurmountable. He resolved to conquer it. The impenetrable barrier which lay between them should be removed. The deadly hatred of John Morley—and he had every reason to believe his hatred to be deadly—must be overcome. Hester's own heart, still free, and given neither to Grant nor himself, had to be won. It seemed on the whole as if he had very much in his favour—wealth, rank, good looks, refinement and cultivation. He would set them all against the accusing memory that rose against him. By lifting Hester so far above her station, the wrong would be in part balanced which had dragged down Rose into depths far below hers.

The idea of the honour proposed for her never dawned upon Hester. Her interviews with Robert Waldron were not clandestine to her, as they would have been to any other girl. There was no one to inquire where she went and whom she saw; no one to whom she was in any way bound to give an account of her actions. She would almost rather have died than have mentioned Robert Waldron's name to her father. But, for herself, she did not shrink from seeing him, and conversing with him. There was an old childish tenderness lurking still in her heart, which wrapped about him and Rose, as

about two beings who had made the brightest interval of her young life. Her knowledge of their sin was vague; and a thickly woven veil of forgiveness wrought through the long years was thrown over it by her. But the very purity and intensity of her forgiveness protected her. She had never thought of love, and the thought did not awaken at any touch of Robert Waldron's.

It seemed as if Hester was just now brought into more close and frequent contact with the Waldrons. Miss Waldron organised anew her meetings for the female members of the church, and quite naturally Hester became a regular attendant at them. She was then constantly associating with her former teacher and patroness; and though Miss Waldron was not a whit less patronising than when she was a child, she had grown up to it, and thought of it only as "Miss Waldron's way." As to Mr. Waldron, she saw him often at chapel, and he always smiled upon her with a look of admiration, amounting to affection, as she accompanied her grey-bearded father along the chapel aisle. "If it had only been possible," he thought "how gladly I would have welcomed her as my son's wife!"

Though Mr. Waldron was now a great man, he could look back upon his early days when he had been used to visit his grandfather, the tenant of a small and poor farm, holding a position not much higher than an agricultural labourer. He was not a man to ignore or despise his own lowly origin, though his daughter did both; while Robert was so well content with his present position as to be indifferent to that which had been his grandfather's and great-grandfather's. Two generations back, it would have been John Morley who would have been visited with scruples as to the fitness of such a marriage.

Book the Second.

CHAPTER THE FIRST. THE STUDENT.

Now that Mr. Waldron had no other interests to engage him, he had leisure to give his whole attention to the affairs of the church; and he soon came to the conclusion that the great age and growing infirmities of its old pastor demanded some efficient assistance in the performance of his duties. Since John Morley had withdrawn from all active participation in church matters, the whole power and influence had fallen naturally into the hands of Mr. Waldron, who ruled without a voice being raised against him, or even a secret whisper among his brethren, who looked up to him from afar off as to one who had an unquestionable authority. When, therefore, he proposed, in a church-meeting assembled especially for the purpose, that a colleague should be elected for Mr. Watson, adding, in a business-like manner, that he would pay him a

salary from his own pocket, and not trouble the church with that charge, the proposition was carried unanimously and with applause; and the choice was entrusted solely to him.

Not solely to Mr. Waldron, however. It was an all-important charge, and Miss Waldron felt that the great responsibility rested upon her devoted shoulders, which bore some cross perpetually. In fact, the church at Little Aston was governed by her through her father, though perhaps unconsciously as to him. She made the choice of a colleague a subject of very anxious thought in her own closet, which was a very luxuriously furnished dressing-room, where she could meditate for hours without risk of intrusion. It would not do to have a married minister, who might be under the legitimate domination of a wife; yet a young pastor was a somewhat dangerous creature to let loose in her fold of lambs. She balanced the disadvantages of both states with the most profound solicitude, but at length decided in favour of a young minister, who should be entirely free from female influence; the more so as she did not shrink from the necessity of keeping a more vigilant oversight of her own part of the flock. This decision was communicated to her father, but represented under quite a different phase; and Mr. Waldron agreed with her that they might do some untried but devoted young man an untold good by introducing him into the ministry under their patronage.

Not many days afterwards, Mr. and Miss Waldron found themselves at the entrance of a college, where the young ministers of their denomination were in training for the future discharge of the duties belonging to their office. It was a large, modern building, in the suburbs of a busy manufacturing town, the distant hum of which blended with the quiet of a place of study. Of course it possessed none of the venerable associations of ancient colleges; but there was a sober air of respectability and steady work about it, not altogether unlike the factories of the neighbourhood.

Miss Waldron appeared to be here in her proper element—to breathe her native air. No romance clustered about the place; but there was the clear fact of seventy or eighty students wrestling from morning till night, and possibly from night till morning again, with those knotty problems of doctrine which exercised her own spirit. An atmosphere of controversy was wafted through the long corridors, with study-doors on each side in regular ranks: A murmur, perceptible only to fine ears, of theological discussion breathed in the quiet air. Again Miss Waldron felt that, by having been born a woman, she had missed her avocation. Here was her true home, and the pulpit was her sphere.

The president of the college, the Rev. James Harvey, D.D., received the ex-member of Parliament and his daughter with a mingled deference

and dignity due to their position and his own. They were old acquaintances, and could dispense with some of the formalities of strangers, so that Mr. Waldron quickly opened to him the mission upon which he had come.

"I do not promise that it shall be a very great thing for a young man," he said. "I shall ask no assistance from the church. I do not think of offering a salary of more than a hundred a year, until I see how he suits me. But it will be an opening, and most probably would be the stepping-stone to another and wealthier church. A young minister, with my influence, might obtain a good charge in a year or two."

"No doubt, no doubt," replied Doctor Harvey.

"We require," said Miss Waldron, thinking it was time for her to speak, "a young man of eminent piety, who will have no thought except for souls. He must be an interesting preacher, with a pleasant voice and choice language, but above all sound in doctrine. We want no German neology among us. We should like one, too, who could make himself a pleasing companion to my poor brother, who is still in the bondage of sin—one who would exert a wholesome influence over him; and as Robert is exceedingly fastidious, it is essential that he should be a gentleman, Doctor Harvey. It is yet more important that he should not be self-willed and opinionative; still he must not be weak-minded, or he will soon fall into the usual follies of a young pastor. He must be one who will look to us for guidance and companionship, and who could visit at Aston Court upon suitable terms."

The last sentence was a little vague, and a young pastor might reasonably have demanded a definition of the words "suitable terms." But Doctor Harvey bowed low to Miss Waldron, and remarked that it would be a singular advantage to any young man. He mused for some minutes, with his pen upon his lips, as if he were passing his seventy students in review before his mind's eye. His aspect remained grave and calculating; but presently it brightened, and he nodded his head assentingly to his own thoughts.

"I have two of our young men in my eye at this moment," he said, "either of whom might do well for you, if you could assure him leisure to complete his course of study at Little Aston."

"Certainly," replied Miss Waldron; "we have a complete library which shall be at his disposal; and I should myself take great interest in his studies."

"There is David Scott," pursued Doctor Harvey, "a fine logical and analytical mind, with the true ring of Calvin in it; pure gold, air, but a little unrefined as yet. And there is Carl Bramwell. You recollect Charles Bramwell, our minister at Park Lane Chapel, and his father, old John Bramwell? They are the father and grandfather of this young man. A good lineage, and a young fellow of great

promise, but a little too much inclined to be speculative, if he has a fault. It would be the making of either of them to be under your eye for a year or two. We will go and visit them both in their studies, if you do not mind the trouble."

Neither of them minded the trouble, and they rose to accompany the doctor with alacrity. The profound tranquillity of the place, and the associations connected with it, brought an unusual thrill of excitement to Miss Waldron. She trod with a quicker step, and spoke in a lower key, as they passed one after another by the closed doors. At length Doctor Harvey paused at one, and turning to her, said, "David Scott," as he knocked a sounding knock upon the panel, and waited for a moment to hear the words "Come in."

"He is a trifle deaf, but a fine fellow."

Miss Waldron felt a chill, which was not removed by the appearance of the student, a gaunt, awkward, ill-dressed lad from Scotland, who stared at her with embarrassment, and was hardly able to respond coherently to the observations made to him by Doctor Harvey. Their visit lasted but a few minutes; and Miss Waldron left the study with a painful sense of discouragement.

"I am sure he will not do for us at all," she said.

"You ought to have seen him first in the pulpit," replied Doctor Harvey; "he is quite another being there, and handles his subject like a master. He will make a mark in the world by-and-by. But this is Carl Bramwell's room."

The doctor knocked lightly, but received no answer. There was the stillness of emptiness in the study. Miss Waldron's spirits sank yet lower; she felt doomed to disappointment.

"Bramwell must be absent," said the doctor; "but we will just look in, and see his books."

The young student was absent, but only in the sense of being absent in mind. He was seated on the low, broad window-sill, so absorbed in the study of a book which rested upon his knees, that he had neither heard the knock nor the opening of the door. Miss Waldron had time to give him a lightning glance of criticism, and her heart leaped with joy, which sent the warm blood to her cheek. His face was one of those which come from a long line of thoughtful and educated men: the fine, thin, spiritual face of a born scholar, scarcely concealing the ardour with which his mind was now busily at work over some favourite study. He was young, certainly not more than four-and-twenty, and his figure was slight and delicate. Just now the sun shone aslant upon his head, and displayed a profile of perfect regularity, with the lips upon the point of parting with a smile of keen intellectual delight. Miss Waldron had found the goodly pearl she had been seeking.

"Mr. Bramwell," said the doctor, laying his hand upon the shoulder of the student, who started

from his abstraction with a fine glow upon his face, "I knocked, and as you gave no answer I thought your room was vacant, and I took the liberty of introducing some friends to it, as the best in the college—Miss Waldron and Mr. Waldron."

The well-known name carried no awe with it to the spirit of the young man, but he saluted the patron of the college and his daughter with an air of well-bred respect and welcome. He stepped aside for them to admire the view from his window; and when either of them addressed him, he answered freely but modestly.

"My time here is nearly finished," he said, in answer to a question of Miss Waldron's. "I shall have been in college three years, and shall have completed my course of study, so far. It has been a happy time to me."

"Have you any church in prospect?" she inquired, with a palpitating heart.

"Not yet," he answered, smiling, "but I am not anxious about it. The doctor has promised to interest himself for me when my time is up."

"Would you be willing to give up the four or five months still belonging to you, and take a charge at once?" inquired Doctor Harvey; and Miss Waldron felt strangely disquieted as the student hesitated before replying.

"I would rather not," he said, "but I would be governed by your advice. My examination in the London University will come off in six months or so, but I am pretty well prepared for it already. If you bade me go, doctor, I would go."

"Would you object to a small country church?" asked Miss Waldron, more anxious than ever to secure him.

"Not at all, especially for my first charge."

"Nor to a co-pastorate?" inquired Mr. Waldron.

"My colleague and I would both have to prove whether we suited one another," he answered.

"Have you any mother or sister, who would wish to live with you?" asked Miss Waldron, afraid that she should not secure him free from female influence.

"I have one only sister," answered Carl, smiling again, "and she is about to be married soon to a young surgeon of the name of Grant, who is settled at Little Aston, near your residence."

"We know him well," she replied graciously. "So your sister is going to be married to him.—Father, I am sure we may open our proposal to Mr. Bramwell. His sister's residence at Little Aston would be an inducement to him to come."

Carl's face kindled and flushed as he instinctively caught at the meaning of Miss Waldron's words. To live for some years near to his sister and his friend, appeared the height of human happiness to him, who had so often vainly longed for a home and domestic pleasures. With a small and pure church, into which no maxims or principles of the

world could find an entry ; with a pleasant home in his sister's house, and the companionship of the two relatives dearest to him upon earth, he could have no desire of his heart ungratified. He heard Mr. Waldron and Doctor Harvey discoursing, but he hardly understood them. All he was sure of at the close of the interview was that a co-pastorate at Little Aston had been offered to him, and that his almost monastic study had been visited by a being who had looked at him with a gracious and pleasant smile, and spoken to him in a voice set to a softer key than the rough masculine tones of his fellow-students.

Carl Bramwell would have given his answer at once, but his cautious seniors insisted upon his taking a week to consider it. He received two letters of ecstasy from Grant and his sister. Their marriage was to take place in a few weeks, after which he was to have his home with them. Until that event he was invited to stay at Aston Court itself, to be introduced under Mr. Waldron's auspices to the church, and to be initiated in the onerous duties of a pastor.

It had occurred to Mr. Waldron, in connection with their choice of this young student, that nowhere could be found a more suitable match for his little favourite, Hester. The red-haired Scotchman he had rejected in his own mind the moment he saw him ; but Carl Bramwell was certainly born for Hester, and she for him. He pleased himself with building a few castles in the air, for even elderly men will be guilty of this folly, and when Carl came he received him with an effusion of welcome.

CHAPTER THE SECOND.

THE NEW PASTOR.

CARL BRAMWELL quitted his calm student-life with a natural feeling of regret, but also with a glow of enthusiasm at the first view of the wide stream of human interests, with its restless tides, which was about to bear him he knew not whither. He was about to take upon his own soul the care of other souls. An unutterable and solemn tenderness filled his heart as he thought of these human spirits, frail, wavering between evil and good, tempted, sad, palpitating with the first germs of immortality planted in the midst of many thorns. He prepared his heart beforehand for the love, half that of a mother, which a true pastor should feel for his church. How he would study his people ! how he would watch over them ! how quietly he would root up the choking thorns, and let the free air and sunshine play about the young buds of Divine grace ! This life, with its long hot days and weary weeks of labour, would be a hundredfold more worthy of a man than the serene egotism of a study.

There were other considerations which Carl's chivalrous ardour disdained to take account of. In the college he had been only one of seventy, each

of whom had an equal claim to the attention bestowed upon them. He had had but the seventieth share of a pulpit. He had lived in a mass ; been spoken to, looked at, fed, and generally cared for, as only an item in a large sum total. Now he was about to become the chief person in a circle which, however small and contracted, would invest every word and action of his with importance and meaning. In a small church the pastor is even more an individual set apart than in the churches of great towns. Every one of his scanty congregation would have a lively and minute interest in him personally. Of this future church of his, Carl knew two persons exceedingly well by report, and had for some months taken an almost extravagant concern in them. Grant had written often about John Morley and Hester, and Carl's interest had been keenly excited. Now that he was on the point of being brought into so intimate a relationship with them, he read over again the letters which had put him into possession of so much of their history ; he found himself about to enter upon the stage of one of those romantic incidents which now and then are acted before us on our journey through life.

He met with a very cordial welcome at Aston Court, and was more impressed and affected than he knew himself, by the suddenness of the change from the bareness and inelegance of his college to the wealthy luxury of Mr. Waldron's mansion. All about him suited his rather delicate temperament, and chimed in with a somewhat hereditary refinement of taste. Robert Waldron appeared to him a finished gentleman, and even Miss Waldron, to a young man who had known nothing of female society during many years, appeared pleasing and graceful. She had considerably modified her early rigour on the subject of dress, and assumed her dingy brown costume and unbecoming bonnet only when engaged in religious services. At home, and especially during the present epoch, she chose pretty colours and soft materials, and even condescended to employ a number of worldly artifices for disguising the ravages of time.

Yet towards Carl she adopted the tone of an elder sister, assuming a few years of seniority—in some degree the most flattering and most beguiling manner of administering to a young man's self-love. He was very soon persuaded that Miss Waldron was one of the most charming as well as the most saintly women of her times ; only a grade or two below the perfection she sought to attain to. She had confided to him, also, that the sole object of her life was her own sanctification and the welfare of her perishing fellow-creatures.

Robert Waldron was uneasy about this new protégé of his sister's, with a sharp jealousy of his ten years' juniority, and the freshness of his manhood, which still wore the glory and brightness of

a morning without clouds. The first moment in which his eye fell upon the clear-cut features and the scholarly refinement of the young pastor's face, and his ears heard the pleasant and pure utterance of his voice, he had instinctively, and with a tremor of dismay, pictured to himself Hester sitting in her seat at chapel, with her sweet pale face, and her grey eyes, with the soul shining through them, lifted up in rapt attention to the preacher's words. He hoped ardently that he was a fool, and he tested him.

Carl was no fool; his mind was vigorous and cultivated, and his tact wonderful for a mere student. It was true that upon many points he was ignorant of the world's customs and usages, but his very ignorance was a charm; it was the pure innocence of a soul which had never looked into the muddy depths of worldly ways. Robert could not help but like him; yet he would gladly have sacrificed half his fortune to prevent Carl Bramwell becoming the co-pastor at Little Aston. But fate and Miss Waldron were too strong.

It was well for Robert's peace of mind that he did not happen to be present at a short conversation which had taken place a morning or two after Carl's arrival. The appointed time for introducing him to his future charge at a church-meeting was drawing near, but until then Miss Waldron had guarded her new acquisition from the intrusion of any unseasonable visitor. This evening he was to be received as co-pastor with Mr. Watson in the presence of the assembled church; but early in the day a messenger arrived to say that the old minister was seized with an alarming illness, and could not by any possibility leave his own chamber.

"The meeting must proceed as arranged," said Miss Waldron decisively. "There will be the more necessity for it, as Mr. Bramwell must at once take upon himself the duties of the pastorate."

"And Hester Morley was to have been received into the church," observed Mr. Waldron.

"So she was," exclaimed Miss Waldron, with a pause of deliberation; afterwards, "What is to be done now, father?"

Carl had heard this name spoken for the first time with a quickened pulse and more attentive ear; but he waited a moment or two for Mr. Waldron's answer, which did not come.

"Who is Hester Morley?" he asked, with a slight hesitation in his manner, which escaped Miss Waldron's not very keen observation. It needed a very obvious emotion to be manifest to her rather dull sensibility.

"She is a young girl in my Bible-class," she replied, with an air of humility, "over whom I have watched most anxiously. She is little more than a child, and worse than motherless. But that is a painful topic to us all. Mr. Waldron was to have

given her the right hand of fellowship to-night, as next Sabbath is the ordinance."

"But cannot Mr. Bramwell receive her into the church?" suggested Mr. Waldron.

"I think not," she said hastily. "Hester is very much attached to Mr. Watson, and he to her. It would be unkind to him. No, no, that will not do."

"I will see Mr. Watson and Hester in the course of the day," said Mr. Waldron.

"No, no," she urged in a peremptory tone; "it would divide the interest, and confuse Mr. Bramwell's thoughts, which should be centred on his own solemn obligations. Hester must wait."

"I have heard something of her and of her father from Grant," said Carl, still speaking shyly, and glancing about him to see if Robert was anywhere within hearing. "They must be among the most interesting people in our church."

"Well, I don't know," said Miss Waldron rather sharply. "I think John Morley no more a Christian than any benighted heathen in foreign lands; indeed, in my opinion, he is worse. Hester is a white-faced, thin, overgrown girl, with very little to say for herself. We do not see very much of either of them; for, of course, they are in quite a different position to ours, and now that Hester is no longer a child, I do not know that it would be well for her to visit here. I dare say you will see John Morley to-night, and if you can bring him to any better state of mind, I shall rejoice greatly."

She looked up into his face with a smile of sympathy and sisterly interest; and the young man felt penetrated with a sense of gratitude to her. But it could not altogether blot out the thought of John Morley and his daughter, and the wonder whether Hester would not be admitted into the church that evening. As Miss Waldron had predicted, the mention of it only confused Mr. Bramwell's mind, which would otherwise have been centred upon his own solemn obligations. He remembered how Grant had once said of John Morley, "He would perhaps show his heart to you, Carl; but you will never come across him." Yet he was now about to enter upon a definite relationship with this very man, which would give him almost a right to seek his confidence. As for Hester, he felt a little disappointed at the portrait Miss Waldron had sketched of her, and he could not help smiling at the different colours in which Grant had painted it. No doubt Miss Waldron was more correct than Grant. She had seen Hester grow up under her eyes, and had known her face well. It provoked him greatly that, amid all the solemn thoughts of this epoch in his life, a shade of vexation should come across him as often as the idea of Hester intruded itself upon his busy brain.



MODERN SMUGGLING.

THE progress of modern civilisation, it has often been said, has a very decided tendency to eliminate the romantic and the picturesque from most of the affairs of life. In nothing, perhaps, is this more strikingly observable than in the change which it has brought about in the matter of smuggling.

The ideal smuggler of old was a brave, resolute desperado. The modern smuggler is an individual of a very different type. From the rugged, weather-beaten hero, the smuggler has degenerated into a cunning cheat, scarcely more dignified or interesting than a mere thief.

But even the vagaries of the low petty thief, though they may not be very dignified, may yet be amusing, and so very frequently are the artifices of the modern smuggler. The articles which prove the greatest temptation to him are, of course, those which are burdened with the heaviest duty, and the ingenuity displayed in the attempts to get ashore with undetected stores of tobacco or spirits, for instance, appears to be simply unbounded in its resources. That such attempts succeed in a vast number of instances can admit of little doubt, notwithstanding the vigilance and acuteness of a large staff of officials. There is no part of a ship or its cargo, or of the personal effects or the wearing apparel of the crew and passengers, which it would not be necessary to examine, before it would be possible to pronounce with certainty that there was no concealment of goods liable to duty. Even the very rigging is to be regarded with suspicion. Ropes have been found to be made of tobacco, and the same material has constituted the pulley wheels inside the blocks. The log of wood hanging over the ship's side by way of "fender" has been sometimes discovered to be merely a shell filled with the fragrant weed. A log of wood, indeed, in almost any form is to be eyed with misgivings.

Some time ago the customs officers had their attention drawn to a number of solid-looking slabs of mahogany. They were imported and exported until they became quite familiar to the searchers, and were examined, when they proved to be merely receptacles for contraband goods. A plan somewhat safer than bringing such cargo fairly into port is to throw it overboard, having, of course, arranged that it shall be picked up. Tin cases properly constructed to float, and to preserve their contents sound and dry, have been landed thus—some of them, unfortunately for the enterprising speculator, by the authorities.

Cargo in the most unlikely forms must be carefully scrutinised, if deception is to be detected. Baskets of fruit have been found with lace at the

bottom, and eggs have been imported in cases, the thick ends of which have been drilled so as to afford carriage for a large number of cigars. A bundle of willows has been known to conceal eight or nine pounds of cavendish in the centre, and a similar deception has been practised in the importation of a hogshead of arsenic, and a crate of live ducks, the tobacco in the latter case being hidden beneath a false bottom to the crate.

False bottoms and lids are amongst the commonest and clumsiest of smugglers' devices. Only amateurs would risk forfeiture and fine on their chance of escaping detection in this way. A much more business-like attempt to impose on the myrmidons of Government was once discovered in an importation from New York, consisting of a number of broomsticks. The custom-house officers, of course, passed such a consignment, and very much to their credit too. The fraud was discovered by one of them being accidentally broken, when it appeared that they were hollow and full of cigars.

As may very easily be imagined, the dress of the crews and passengers of vessels is often found to conceal goods liable to duty. Indeed, in the museum beneath the Custom House, in Thames Street, is the representation of a kind of smuggler's suit—a belt, a "shin-piece," a "thigh-piece," a double waistcoat, etc.—all contrived for concealment of goods in which the customs are interested.

One of the most ingenious and audacious attempts at imposition, by means of an article of wearing apparel, was an effort to pass eighteen hundred-weight of cavendish tobacco, in the form of soles, attached to the boots of the crew of a vessel.

In concealment by means of dress the ladies are by far the most enterprising.

At one time the skirts of a lady are found to conceal twenty-one pounds of tobacco, carefully distributed in receptacles made for the purpose, and supported by bands or braces passing over the shoulders.

Not only the garments of passengers, however, but the simplest articles carried in the hand, are often used for the purpose of illicit concealment. A venerable-looking old gentleman, with gold-rimmed spectacles and a broad-brimmed hat, is thoughtfully pacing the deck, evidently conning over the chapter he has just finished in the solid and serious-looking volume under his arm. The officer who would doubt the respectability of that old gentleman, would be only one degree less suspicious and uncharitable in his disposition than the man who would question the *bona fides* of a broomstick. There are, however, men to whom, alas! even a broad-brimmed hat is not an absolute guarantee of respectability, and who have so little reverence for learning as actually to seize a classic-

looking volume on suspicion. On examination it is found that that old gentleman is a smuggler of watches. He has a large book, the leaves of which have been stuck together in a solid mass, and the body of the volume has then been hollowed out into a receptacle large enough to contain sixty or seventy Geneva watches, which, at the time this deception was practised, were liable to an *ad valorem* duty of twenty per cent.

Here is another studious-looking individual, whose intellectual tastes are clearly indicated by the affectionate way in which he hugs the volume under his arm. He too is a smuggler. His little speculation, however, is not a box of watches, but a flask of gin, the flask being made in the form of a book, with a cork at one end of it to be tucked close up under the arm.

Perhaps the most original attempt at smuggling which has been discovered of late years, was one of which the custom-house authorities have preserved a memento in the museum to which reference has already been made. A number of brown loaves were imported, which, on examination, proved to be so many shells, in which cigars and tobacco were concealed. The articles to be smuggled had been wrapped in newspaper, and afterwards encased in a thin coating of dough, which had then been baked just sufficiently to afford the requisite consistency, and to give the appearance of a *bond fide* loaf.

Very little knowledge of the world would be sufficient to convince any one that there are plenty of people in it who would be ready enough to smuggle, if they could arrange to do it with tolerable safety, and on a scale sufficiently extensive to make it worth their while; but it might reasonably be supposed that the petty trickery by which a few shillings, or at the utmost a very few pounds, could be realised, would be confined to the lower orders. According to official testimony, however, this would be a great mistake. Smuggled cigars, like stolen kisses, appear to be capable of affording a special satisfaction, and in all grades of society there are to be found individuals who are not above practising paltry frauds on the revenue. Illustrations of the truth of this are met with almost daily, but a very striking instance occurred a few years back. An elegantly dressed lady was discovered to be wearing a kind of under-petticoat, with bags extending from top to bottom, and so arranged that when stuffed full she might sit down without betraying her burden. In one of these receptacles was a handsome lace shawl concealed, the culprit said, for the benefit of a lady whose husband was a prominent member of the Government. The fair smuggler was fined a hundred pounds, and in default was imprisoned for a night. Next morning, however, the illustrious principal acknowledged her share by sending a cheque for the amount of the fine.

G. F. MILLIN.

THE OLD DESK.



AND so to the dance they all are gone,

And I sit here by the fire alone.

What shall I do to beguile the time?

They will not return till morning chime.

I'll open, to pass the hours away,

A desk that's been locked for many a day:

A little desk all blotted and scarred,

Of my childish fingers marred:

A little grave, where buried lie

Fond records of the days gone by—

Of friends beloved when my heart was young,

Of griefs that often my heart have wrung.

See in the yellow paper there

My father's and my mother's hair.

They lie together in loving fold,

One dusky tress and a ring of gold;

And the date is fifty years ago.

Here are two more—but white as snow.

This lock was shorn from a sister's head,

When she lay so calm in her coffin-bed.

This from the friend who, through wind and storm,

Had failed me never—brave heart and warm!

Reading these faded letters o'er

May while away an hour or more.

What does this little box disclose?

A faint, sweet scent—a withered rose.

Again through the mist of years I see

The garden fair with flower and tree—

The fitful sky—the summer shower—

The rich fresh smell of mould and flower.

I recall the arbour, with ivy green,

Where we sheltered longer than need have been;

The dewy rosebud given and taken;

And then a blank—and I awaken.

This little letter, the last of all,

I open while softly the tear-drops fall—

A child's note, written in spirits gay,

Proclaiming a coming holiday.

Ah, little son! thou wilt come no more

With thy merry laugh to thy father's door.

He still must struggle in life's hard school,

But thou art under a gentler rule.

I close the desk and I turn the key,

O'erwhelmed by the tide of memory.

With the loved and the lost I pass the time,


Till the dancers return with the morning
chime.

E. CLAXTON.

NOW AND THEN.



"SAT IN THE SHADE"


 COME sit beside me, dearest—
 For cold the night winds blow—
 While by the pine-wood's cheerful
 blaze
 I sing of long ago.

'Twas in the merry springtide,
 The lark sang in the sky,
 Two children played,
 A boy and maid
 Light-hearted—you and I.

And many years rolled o'er us,
Bright springs with sun and show'rs,
And summers with their wealth of bloom,
And plenitude of flow'rs—
'Twas eve in golden autumn,
The black-bird whistled nigh,
A man and maid
Sat in the shade,
Two lovers—you and I.

And now 'tis winter dreary;
The snow lies on the ground;
The sky is dark, and raves the wind
Our forest home around,
But light is in our dwelling,
And sweet the hours go by,
The happy life
Of man and wife,
Two lovers—you and I.

IN WONDER-WORLD.

BY J. E. TAYLOR, AUTHOR OF "HALF-HOURS BY THE SEASIDE," ETC.



The marvellous impulse which has elevated zoological and natural history questions into the latest and most rapidly shifting topics of the day, is already beginning to bear practical fruit. Not since the days of Captain Cook has there been attached so much importance to an exploring expedition, as there is to that which is now commenced by the *Challenge*.

But the chief ends of Captain Cook's three voyages were astronomical and geographical; and we can readily understand the charm which each voyage must have had on the public mind, in bringing before it accounts of new lands, new peoples, new languages, &c.

This charm has not yet died out, and accordingly we find "Cook's Voyages" among the first to interest the youthful inquiring mind. The descriptions are written so vividly—only as descriptions can be when the writer is thoroughly roused by the freshness and novelty of his subject.

The "Cook's Expedition," however, although charged to discover many things in physical and general history, has for its chief aim and end the study of history—including under that term both marine animals and plants.

The importance of the objects of Cook's expedition and the present position of the intellectual progress of the intervening period. When Cook sailed on his first voyage it was but a few years after the then greatest mind in this country, Dr. Johnson, had declared natural history to be only a study for children! If the learned doctor lived now, and found what great questions hung on this despised natural history, he would be a trifle astonished. Prominently before him would be presented the now accepted doctrine of the antiquity of the human race, and of the still more marvellous antiquity of our old world, with its extinct creations of animals and plants.

Three-quarters of a century ago, a man would

have been unquestionably set down as an infidel who doubted whether the world was not more than 6,000 years old. Now we know that it was peopled by race after race before man appeared on the scene, and that the present fauna and flora are but the result of what has gone before, often connected by lineal descent with fossil forms; that many existing species run their genealogical lines backward in varying lengths, but all of them longer than man can show, notwithstanding his own recently discovered antiquity.

Further, the philosophy of natural history is asking all kinds of questions as to how and when the different animals and plants of the globe came to occupy their present habitats. Seeing that one of the most undoubted of facts is that they did not come into existence all together, but that they have relative and varying antiquities, it is asked by what means have they come to be distributed so harmoniously?

We find tribes adapted to high latitudes and high elevations; zones of animal and plant life belting the earth according to climate, life in the sea, on islands, related to the nearest continents, although separated by various depths of sea-water; marine life, occupying different depths, just as plants and animals are found on land at different heights.

Natural history is further connecting geological phenomena, resulting in existing physical geographical conditions, with the distribution of animals and plants into their present provinces. Everywhere the past and the present are becoming more connected—less separated by any hard and fast line.

The deep-sea dredgings of the *Porcupine*, under Professor Wyville-Thomson and Dr. Carpenter, and those conducted by the American Government, under Professors Agassiz, Verrill, and Pourtales, have also shown that many marine forms, hitherto deemed extinct, still live in abyssal or unexplored parts of the sea; that even types that have been regarded as certain indications of the very oldest rocks have not yet died out, but endure a lingering

existence in those quiet and deeper parts of the sea, where they have not to fight such a stiff "battle for life" with new-comers, as has elsewhere reduced their race to its present attenuated existence.

These are wonderful questions, and none will deny their importance. Those who have thus gone down to the deep have beheld its living wonders. Although they cannot influence the "whither" of man's destiny, they may influence his "whence." Further, they provide topics for intellectual inquiry, without which the human mind would become inevitably dwarfed. No wonder, therefore, that the errand on which Her Majesty's ship *Challenger* is bent should be regarded with such interest by naturalists all over the world. The discoveries of Captain Cook were chiefly English property—those of the present expedition are cosmopolitan. With a munificence that not even the United States expeditions can parallel, the *Challenger* has been fitted up specially for biological discovery. It is a prophetic sign of the times that a huge war-ship should be specially dismantled and turned to scientific purposes. When the vessel started on her three years' voyage of discovery, last December, our illustrious friend *Punch* celebrated the transformation in the following lines:—

"Broadside guns have made room to ship batteries magnetic,
Apparatus turns out ammunition,
From main-deck to ground-tier I'm a peripatetic
Polytechnic marine exhibition!"

The *Challenger* has a greater tonnage than the three ships together which formed Cook's expedition in 1772, possessing 2,300 tons displacement. She is described as having all the accommodation of a frigate with the handiness and draught of water of a corvette; therefore a better adapted vessel for the purposes she is bent on could not have been found. The vessel has been rendered independent of wind and tide by two marine engines of 400 horse-power each. Amidships are placed stages, from whence the most important of all the fittings for zoological research—the dredges—are worked. Several hundreds of miles of whale-line have been specially prepared for the dredges, of which the *Challenger* carries no fewer than forty. The work-rooms for the naturalists of the expedition have also been fitted up with every requisite to aid research—with books, microscopes, dissecting instruments, maps, bottles, etc. The commander is a man well known as himself a naturalist, Captain Nares, and his officers appeared to be actuated by the same spirit of discovery. As the vessel, however, is only a means to an end, the greatest importance should be attached to those scientific gentlemen who are entrusted with the observations intended to be made. At the head of these is Professor Wyville-Thomson, one of the most choicest of naturalists since the days of poor Edward Forbes,

and a man who has greatly distinguished himself by the deep-sea researches of the *Porpoise*, in conjunction with Dr. Carpenter. The professor has given up his appointment, and left home and friends for three years, in order to take charge of and direct the present expedition. The opinion of the scientific world is unanimous in declaring he is the right man in the right place, an event that does sometimes occur. His coadjutors are, many of them, young men who have already distinguished themselves, and who hope to do so further by their present engagement, so that there is no doubt they will put forth their best efforts. Mr. Mosely (who lately held the Radcliffe Travelling Fellowship, and whose contributions on the internal structure of various branches of the invertebrata prove him a careful observer), Dr. Willemoes Suhm, of Munich, and Mr. Murray are the naturalists, Mr. Buchanan is chemist, and Mr. Wild photographer to the expedition.

The route appointed for the *Challenger* by the Admiralty is one of the most interesting that could have been marked out, inasmuch as a great deal of the ground to be gone over is connected with recent speculations or discoveries in zoology and physical geography. The vessel may be away three or four years, for there is no specified time fixed; although it is very certain the work mapped out cannot be done, under the most favourable auspices, under three years. Not only are the deep-sea basins of the globe to be dredged and examined with a view to ascertaining their zoology, but their physical conditions are also to be worked out. Hence it is that the *Challenger* has been working down the coasts of Portugal and Spain, and has been at Madeira, on her way across the Atlantic to the West Indian Islands. Thence she goes to Bermuda and the Azores, the Cape de Verde Islands, the coast of South America, and back, across the South Atlantic, to the Cape of Good Hope. After staying at the latter place a short time, she will proceed by the Marion Islands, the Crozets, and Kerguelen Land to Australia and New Zealand. In the latter part of this route, the *Challenger* is to go southwards, opposite the centre of the Indian Ocean, as near as possible to the great southern ice-barrier, where experiments have to be conducted so as to ascertain the temperatures of the sea at different depths. There, also, a line of soundings will have to be taken, in as nearly a north-and-south direction as may be. After leaving New Zealand, the vessel passes through the Coral Sea and Torres Straits (separating New Guinea from the extreme point of North Australia). This part of the voyage is sure to be rich in zoological incident and discovery, for one of the objects is to ascertain the limitation of the area and depth of reef-building corals. The great "Barrier Reef" stretches along the coasts of North Australia—the

longest and perhaps oldest existing coral reef in the world.

At the last meeting of the British Association, the president, Dr. Carpenter, suggested that the reason why the coral-reef animals could not live at a greater depth than about twenty-five fathoms, was that the temperature below that was not congenial to them. Hence, he made it a question of temperature, not of pressure, as to what depth these lowly organised creatures might exist at. It follows from this that in areas where the proper temperature extends to a much greater depth than twenty-five fathoms, as in the Red Sea, there reef-building corals ought to be found in the living state. When in the Coral Sea, as it is appropriately called, the *Challenger* will make experiments with a view of determining whether it is pressure or temperature that regulates the vertical distribution of these animals. There is little doubt that this part of the voyage will be a prolonged one, for the shallow-water animals of the shores of New Guinea are to be examined, and compared with those living under similar physical conditions off the opposite coasts of North Australia. By a true comparison of these it will be possible, approximately, to fix the period when New Guinea and Australia were disjoined. For this rule holds good in geographical zoology, that islands which are separated from adjacent mainlands by shallow seas have invariably the same fauna and flora; whilst islands separated by deep seas have their indigenous animals and plants dissimilar—the deduction being that deep water indicates a long period of separation, during which the animals and plants have relatively altered; whilst a shallow sea is equally a proof of a recent zoological change. If we apply this principle to the British Islands, and compare our fauna and flora with those of the Continent, we shall find the latter rule holds good; whilst if we compare those of the Azores to the African types, we equally prove the applicability of the former rule—the intervening sea sometimes reaching a depth of 30,000 feet.

Nowhere, perhaps, has the difference in sea-depth between neighbouring lands been more distinctly shown than in the groups of islands connecting, more or less, the peninsula of Malacca with Australia. Those clustering round the former, and, so to speak, continuing it, are called the Malayan Archipelago. They are zoologically, although not geographically, separated from the Papuan group by what is known to naturalists as "Wallace's Line," which runs between Lombok and Bali. In his work on the "Malayan Archipelago," Mr. Alfred Wallace has shown that the straits between these two islands—although only fifteen miles across—separate two great provinces of animals and plants as distinctly as if a wide ocean intervened. On the one side we have the Australian type, on the other the Malayan

or Indian. How is this? He explained it by showing that the Indian islands were connected by a shallow submarine plateau, and that the Australian group were similarly situated. This proves that the depression which has broken up a once continuous land, and formed these islands out of the higher parts, is comparatively modern, for outside a deep sea prevails. Further, the Straits of Lombok must have been straits separating these ancient lands for a long period before their partial submergence, for the water there is much deeper than over either the Indian or the Australian submarine plateau. This being the case, the Straits of Lombok must for ages have acted as a natural barrier to the two geographical divisions, and hence the definitive character of the two faunas and floras at the present time, where no visible barrier seems to intervene. Along this line the *Challenger* will slowly thread her way, making soundings, dredgings, etc., to throw as much light as possible on so interesting a subject. Thence she will make through the Celebes and Sulu Seas to Manilla. Not long ago, an officer dredged the sea-bed in the Celebes at a depth of nearly four miles, and brought up portions of the marine mud charged with remains of lowly organised life.

After leaving Manilla, the exploring expedition will pass eastwards into the Pacific, visiting New Guinea, New Britain, and the Solomon Islands. Thence it will sail to Japan, where a lengthened pause will be made to investigate the zoology of this, one of the most interesting and unknown areas of the globe.

From Japan, the *Challenger* will cross the Pacific to Vancouver's Island, and dredge there. It is more than probable that the investigation will be scientifically valuable, for we already know that one of the common shells of our "crags," not long since believed extinct, is still living in those waters.

From Vancouver's Island, the ship will pass through the easterly trough of the Pacific, and homewards by Cape Horn, investigating on its way the phenomena of the Gulf Stream, dredging off the coasts of the Antilles, where Pourtales has made such interesting discoveries of forms thought to have been long ago extinct; exploring the bottom of the South Atlantic, where, perhaps, the deepest dredgings of any will have to be made.

The marine life of this part of the world is utterly unknown to zoologists, and therefore we may reasonably expect that many new and strange species will be brought to light. Equally fruitful will be the researches carried on between Japan and Vancouver's Island, for the Pacific is believed to possess many living organisms not found elsewhere, except in a fossil state.

It will be seen, therefore, that the route appointed

is no meagre one, and when it is remembered that, apart from marine zoologising and botanising, ascertaining rates of currents, temperatures at various depths, taking soundings, etc., the naturalists have to note the ethnological, geological, botanical, entomological, ornithological, and general zoological characters of the places where pauses are made, our readers will grant that the expedition has no slight or unimportant work cut out for it.

Already zoologists at home have had food for speculation and comparison provided for them by the *Challenger*. Near Madeira successful trawlings were made at a depth of nearly two miles and a half, and several new species of animals were discovered at that depth. It was supposed by Professor Edward Forbes that at a depth beyond six hundred yards, owing to the pressure, cold, and absence of light, no highly organised animals could exist. Recent researches, however, have proved that this is fallacious, and the trawls of the *Challenger* still further negative it. The most striking among the "finds" here made was, perhaps, a pretty sponge, taken off St. Vincent, which may be known to many of our readers who have seen it elevated into a drawing-room ornament, by the name of "Venus' Flower-basket" (*Euplectella aspergillum*). Hitherto it has been found only in the seas of the Philippine Islands, and its occurrence off Portugal shows the changes that have taken place since this form was introduced. Notwithstanding its lovely appearance, interwoven in the most delicate and lace-like of patterns by a white siliceous net-work—so beautiful that we have seen good naturalists refuse at first to believe it was a natural organism—the "Venus' Flower-basket" is only a sponge, of which this is the skeleton, the soft sponge-flesh having drained off it as if it had been covered by the white of an egg! When the first specimen of this species of sponge was brought to England, it fetched the price of thirty pounds.

Those of our readers who know anything about geology, will certainly remember the ancient *Trilobites* of the Silurian rocks—the commonest fossils found there. Well, one of the crustaceans dredged up in the recent two-mile trawl of the *Challenger* was in some respects, chiefly as regards the structure of the eyes, related to these ancient organisms. It belongs, however, to quite a distinct group, one more nearly related to the gigantic lobster-like

animals (*Eurypterida*) found in the Upper Silurian and Lower Devonian formations than, structurally, to the *Trilobites*. The eyes of the latter are sessile and compound, and are usually found in two half-moon-shaped areas. In this respect the newly discovered Portuguese crustacean resembles them.

An object which Professor Thomson seems to have been specially pleased with, however, was a zoophyte allied to the common "sea-mats" of our own coasts, but which greatly resembles a fossil found in the Cambrian rocks, whose true character has not yet been made out. The professor enthusiastically terms it a "lovely thing," and we can readily believe him, if it is anything resembling in beauty the "Venus' Flower-basket." It forms, by means of its many branches, a graceful cup, the bases of the branches being united by a transparent stem two or three inches in height, like the stem of a claret-glass. This pretty little stranger, so likely to throw light on one of the commonest fossils of our oldest rocks, has already been christened, in honour of the captain of the *Challenger*, "Naresia."

Another living object, which seems to have pleased Professor Thomson no less than the above, was a sea-urchin, but belonging to a group only found, but that very abundantly, as a fossil in our English chalk. This species had previously been found by Pourtales, in his dredgings off Florida, on the other side of the Atlantic—a significant circumstance, as its geographical separation indicates its antiquity, for none will believe there were two separate creations of this animal in areas so wide asunder. Its genus will be readily recognised by any of our readers who have collected it as a chalk fossil, by the name of *Salenia*. Side by side with this were dredged up species of sponges, equally nearly allied to those other common chalk fossils called "Ventriculites," the roots, etc., of which, when they occur in flint, form the objects better known as "Brighton pebbles."

Thus far, therefore, it will be seen that the exploration of deep and hitherto unknown parts of the sea-bed is not only throwing light on the relations and habits of ancient fossil remains, but is assisting philosophical naturalists in tracing the antiquity of various forms, and in showing the vast changes that have taken place since these were introduced.

PAINTED APPLE-BLOSSOM.

ALL thro' the year, and year by year will bloom
This blush of Spring arrested in my room;

While Nature's self, to rival it, must bring
Her breathing buds renewed each passing Spring.
GERALD MASSEY.

ONCE A COWARD.

IN TWO CHAPTERS.—CHAPTER THE SECOND.



WISH that I could tell you my feelings during the two minutes that followed. I do not believe any audience ever found themselves in so miserable a position. Even now when I think of it I feel the old hot, sick sensation, and see the whole picture rising before me—the old-fashioned panelled room, with the wet wind rattling at the huge

diamond-paned window, and a pale watery moon glimmering between drifting masses of cloud over the ancient elm-trees in the park; the red glowing fire in its carved oaken frame; the tall, graceful figure of the man standing before it in his dark velvet shooting-jacket, and muddy leathern gaiters, and with the pale shadow of irremediable remorse on his handsome face; and the tall, beautiful girl sitting with bent golden head and clasped white hands before him, with the scarlet firelight kissing her fair round arms, and lurking in the shimmery folds of her white dress.

Can any of you tell me the length of time comprised in one minute? Sixty seconds? No, rather six hundred. It seemed double that time to me that I stood longing for Helen to speak, longing to say something myself, and yet unable to find a single word between horror at the story and pity for the man who told it. It was Ducie himself who broke that terrible silence at last. His voice had been harsh and determined before: now it sounded sad, weary, almost appealing.

"That is all. I never told any one before. I don't think I could act in the same way again; but God knows, only you see I cannot hear other men condemned while I remember—" He broke off with a sort of gasp, and added hurriedly, "I wish to Heaven I had never needed to tell you; for of course I know what you think of me now."

He looked at Helen; but she never raised her eyes; and I answered quickly—

"I wish you had not, Ducie. There was no occasion; but I am very sorry for you—from my soul I am, old fellow."

I would have given him my hand; but though he said, "Thank you, Fred," as if he meant it, his eyes never left Helen's face. She had never moved or looked up once since he began. I feel sure now that she knew from the commencement that he was speaking of himself; but it was only when he said, "I was the man," that her face, which had been white to the lips, flushed scarlet as though the

threatened blow had fallen; and such a look came over it—a look of pain unutterable, of bitter shame, of unconquerable disgust; a look which but to see once in the face of the woman we love might well make the voice break and the heart sink as Ducie's did then.

It was still there when he ceased to speak, and she rose up, calm and cold as if nothing had been said which could call for comment from her, and simply observing that it must be time to prepare for dinner, left the room without a glance towards either of us.

I strode after her, meaning to call her back and ask her to say a kind word to Ducie; but she put out her hands with an imploring gesture, and turning her face away, ran up-stairs.

When I returned slowly and awkwardly to the library, Ducie also had left it by the other door. I was not sorry.

We all met at dinner as if nothing was amiss. Mary Jackson and I were, I think, rather more lively than usual, and even Tom made himself so pleasant to Cis Devereux, that my dear old father said it did him good to hear such a clatter of voices. Ducie was very silent, it is true, and Helen's face was colourless as a Guernsey daisy; but she spoke and even smiled whenever appealed to; and none but myself remarked that when Ducie held the door open for the ladies, after dinner, she drew the silken folds of her dress together, and passed him without a glance, as something too foul for notice. His face was whiter than hers when he sat down again.

Next day we parted. I was busy all the morning over farming accounts, and did not know Ducie was going till the dogcart was at the door, and he came in to bid me good-bye. Then I saw he was much agitated, and I urged him to stay, using Helen's name. His lips quivered, but he only said—

"I have already seen your cousin. Good-bye, Fred, and thank you for all your kindness."

Five minutes later he was gone. I said nothing, but I went to look for Miss Helen; and found her moping in the library, with a face like a ghost, and red rims to her eyes.

She mumbled something about a headache. I waived the remark loftily, and taxed her with having refused my friend. She reddened like a rose, and said haughtily that she had done no such thing. He had not had the presumption to ask her.

"Presumption!" quoth I, "and to ask a little vixen! Ah! well, you have sent him away; and what's more, you will never see him again."

At this she paled and panted a little ; then flushed up again, and answered—

"Oh ! yes, we shall, and quite as soon as we want him, I dare say. Oh ! how can you care for him ?—the cruel, dastardly—Oh !—"

This made me angry, for I don't like hitting a man when he's down ; and the vision of poor Ducie's handsome face, with the haggard, beaten look on it, as he shook his head to all my hospitable hopes of soon seeing him again, rather haunted me. So I set myself to bully Helen by way of retaliation, told her she was a proud, self-righteous girl, who didn't deserve to be loved at all ; that she had probably sent a fine young fellow to the bad ; that she had no right to judge anybody ; that if Ducie had acted a coward's part two years ago, he had taken a hero's last night ; that I doubted very much whether she would have had the courage to stand up and blacken herself for ever in the eyes of any one she loved ; that I couldn't ; and that it was a braver and a nobler deed than saving ten men's lives.

Would you believe it ? in the middle of my abuse she suddenly bursts into tears, and instead of quarrelling with me, throws herself into my arms and sobs out—

"Oh, Fred ! so it was. Oh ! I never thought of that ; and I told him—I told him—Oh, dear ! oh, dear !"

"What did you tell him ?"

"I told him I never wished to see him again, because he could never do anything brave enough to blot out the memory of that dreadful, dreadful day."

"And what did he say ?"

"He said, 'You never shall' Oh, Fred, Fred ! what shall I do ?"

"Do ? Write and tell him you are very sorry, and ask him to come back again"—a piece of sensible advice at which Miss Helen springs up, dashes away her tears, says indignantly, "Thank you, Fred, I have not quite lost my self-respect yet, even if your friend has lost his," and marches off to her own room.

I went back to my accounts, and finished them.

Days and weeks slipped by. Our house was hardly empty before I was off myself on a visit to the home of my beloved. Then the hunting season began ; the Hall was again filled with guests, and in the constant round of sport, merriment, and excitement, I must confess that the little incident concerning Ducie's departure escaped my mind. Neither did I notice the change in Helen's looks, and how rapidly she was losing colour, flesh, and spirits, till she looked like the shadow of her former self. You see she never lost her prettiness ; and then a certain little maid was spending her Christmas with us, and that in itself was reason for not being particularly observant of other women's appearance.

Was it the day before, Christmas Eve that the governor told me Lord de Laine had proposed to Helen and been refused ? I think so—I'm not sure. Anyway, it was that day that I first noticed the girl's white face, and spoke to her of Ducie. Her sweet eyes flashed up instantly, and she answered—

"Would you like to have him here this Christmas ?"

"My dear, you told him never to come again."

"Then I was wrong, for it is not my house" (hypocritically !).

"You are mistress in it, and I'll have no friends here whom the mistress cannot welcome."

She blushed up high, put her hand on my arm, and said enthusiastically—

"All your friends are welcome to me, Fred. Please write and ask him at once."

I did so. Shall I ever forget her face when the answer came ? Mr. Ducie had sailed for the Cape three days before, in the royal mail steamship *Tamar*.

We all know the end of that good vessel ; how she encountered hard weather off the Azores ; how she sprang a leak which no pumping day and night could bring under ; how the boats were hoisted out with just enough seamen to work the oars, the passengers lowered into them one by one, women and children first, men afterwards, in perfect discipline and order ; and how, when all were safe, the captain, standing on the poop deck, gave the last command to pull away out of the vortex of the sinking ship ; and the men in the boats, obeying, saw the gallant vessel, with captain, crew, and officers standing hand in hand, brave and resolute to the last, settle heavily down into a deep trough of the waves, and disappear for ever from mortal ken.

Ah, me ! all English hearts were thrilling with the story in those days. It makes mine ache now to recall it.

The boats reached the Azores in safety two days later without having lost a soul ; but it was not for months, not till every inquiry had been made, not till I had gone down to Southampton myself, and interrogated the rescued passengers one by one, that we heard how, when the boats were all but full, and there was only one passenger to descend, one of the crew cried out in despair, "Oh, my little wife and child !" and the passenger, a tall, dark-eyed young man, turned to him and said, "Take my place. There is no one belonging to me at home," and had stood by the captain's side at the last moment, and waved his hat to his friends in the boats in a cheery good-bye.

I found out that sailor, and he gave me a scrap of paper, which he said the gentleman had torn from his pocket-book and given him as he went

over the side. It was to Helen, and contained these words—

"God bless you. I have earned my right to meet you again—in heaven at least."

"H. P. DECIE."

Two years later Helen left us to keep that meet-

ing; and when she was dead I saw the first smile on her pale lips which had ever shone there since she sent her lover away, to prove that a man may die a hero's death though in life he has been once a coward.

THEO. GIFT.

HESTER MORLEY'S PROMISE.

BY HESBA STRETTON,

AUTHOR OF "THE DOCTOR'S DILEMMA," ETC. ETC.

CHAPTER THE THIRD.

THE PASTOR'S DEATH.

THE church at Little Aston was by no means Carl Bramwell's ideal church. With the exception of the Waldrons and Morleys, it consisted almost exclusively of very ordinary persons, of little education and not over-enlightened religion.

Their number was not so large as that of his fellow-students, every one of whose faces he could read as he preached to them. But these people looking at him were his souls. Their eyes were the open windows of spirits who were to be fed by him. A fine film of tears threw a hazy glory over them. He saw nothing of the smallness of their very common church.

Carl's blue eyes grew dim as he sat at Mr. Waldron's right hand, in a square pew under the pulpit; and he felt what an awful thing it is to take the care of souls.

He was so rapt in this enthusiasm, that he neither heard Mr. Waldron speak, nor the congregation rise to their feet, until a voice close beside him, a voice soft and sweet and clear, suddenly rang through his trance and startled him as with an electric shock. It was nothing more than a voice starting the tune for the hymn about to be sung, but Carl turned his head quickly to the spot whence it sounded. He could not be mistaken as to who were the white-haired and sorrow-stricken man and the young girl standing closely at his side; and his own face flushed and burned with an uncontrollable emotion as he caught the glance of both their eyes. It was a hymn of welcome, and he could have wept, but for very shamefacedness, as he listened to it.

His eyes were still dazzled, and his heart beating painfully, when, after Mr. Waldron had said what he had to say in introducing him to his church, he was obliged to stand up alone and face his people, to give utterance to some of the feelings of his heart towards them.

He was speaking with a simple eloquence and earnestness, when the vestry door near to him was opened softly, and his friend Grant stepped to Mr. Waldron's side, and whispered some-

thing in his ear. Carl paused, and Mr. Waldron addressed the meeting in a hurried and trembling voice.

"Brethren," he said, "our dear old pastor, who has been very ill, as you all knew, is now on the point of death, and he desires to see his young colleague immediately, with brother Morley and myself. The necessity is urgent, and we must leave you at once. Let some among you engage in prayer."

A dead silence prevailed while Carl, with Mr. Waldron and John Morley, quitted the lighted chapel, and plunged into the darkness of the streets.

To Carl it seemed more like one of the many dreams of his student life than the sober reality that it was. His ecstasy of emotion was not yet over; the voices that had welcomed him were still ringing in his ears. Yet he was here in the unlit street, following in silence as Mr. Waldron walked before, and with a second companion, known only to him by his melancholy history. He was going, too, to witness the death of an old man, his co-pastor, whom he had never seen. It could be only a dream. If there was anything real in this night's experience, it was that his ears had heard a voice which would make his heart restless till he could hear it again.

They soon reached the minister's little house, and saw one window brightly illuminated by the light which the dulled eyes of the dying often need as they go down into the valley of darkness. Carl shook off the enthralment and bewilderment of his fancies, and roused himself to realise the scene he was about to witness. Mr. Waldron knocked gently at the door, and it was opened in an instant by a woman who awaited their arrival. A line of light fell down the little garden they had crossed, and for the first time Carl became aware that Grant was following them, and with him a slight girlish figure, whose face was veiled.

He had not time to say more, for Mr. Waldron and John Morley had gone on, and were already ascending the staircase. The chamber into which they entered was barely and scantily furnished,

except with books, for it had evidently been the study of the dying man, as well as his bed-room. Their footsteps sounded loudly as they strode across the bare and creaking boards. The curtains of faded chintz were drawn back from the bed, and the old minister's palsied head, propped up with pillows, was turned anxiously towards them. He fastened his glazing eyes upon Carl, and the two other men also turned their gaze instinctively upon him: Mr. Waldron, in his hale and hearty old age, which as yet was only grey

of whom they were both ambassadors. Carl's eyes grew clear, and shone with the kindling of a chivalrous enthusiasm upon the three aged men who confronted him.

"Yes," he said, grasping the chilly and wrinkled hand of the dying man in his own, "I am your brother, and I am ready to take your work when you lay it down. What is it you will have me do? I have many years to live and work in yet."

"There is Hester standing behind you," answered Mr. Watson.



"JUST AS HE WAS PREPARING TO GO OUT."

with the coming shadow; and John Morley, with his air of a century of suffering, which caused him to equal the dying man in his burden of years. These three old men faced him, and looked upon his youth with profound interest. Again he felt himself in a dream, and the silence grew intolerable to him. It was broken by the old pastor stretching out his withered and shaking hand to him, and breathing the word, "Brother."

The single word, spoken in the thin and laboured voice of death, possessed a peculiar pathos, linking as it did the old man, who was putting off his mortality, with his young successor, rich in vigorous life. An eternal brotherhood linked all men together in an unbroken chain with the Divine elder Brother,

She had glided in with her noiseless step, and stood near to him, waiting to approach more closely the old minister. Mr. Waldron's features brightened for an instant, and Mr. Watson raised his head eagerly.

"Come near to me, Hester," he said. "There is nothing that you may not hear. Wait a moment, all of you; I have something to say to you."

He lay still for a few minutes, collecting his thoughts; and Carl looked round the bare room, whose emptiness and bareness made more chilly the atmosphere of death. Was this to be the end of the career upon which he had entered this evening? He did not dare to turn his eyes to the place where Hester sat, beside the pillow of her old

friend; but he saw her, vaguely and indistinctly, bending over him, and wiping the damp cold forehead with her handkerchief. There had been a thought of his own death all day in Carl's mind, as there is in every time of unusual agitation to a sensitive and visionary spirit; but it had not been a solitary and almost friendless death like this.

"I must speak," said the minister, in a sad and well-nigh querulous voice; "I have had very much to bear upon my soul because of my church. It has been a heavy charge; and there is a great deal to be done yet before it will be without spot or blemish. The task has been too hard for me. I pray God you may be stronger for his service than I have been."

"God looks upon your work with other eyes than yours," said Carl. "You will hear him say, 'Well done, good and faithful servant: enter thou into the joy of thy Lord.'"

The dim eyes brightened a little as Carl's voice repeated the familiar words; but he shook his already trembling head despondingly.

"Nay, but I have not been faithful," he answered; "I have been afraid to speak, and kept silence often and often against my conscience. Brethren, bear with me this once. I am more afraid of God than of you at this moment. Your divisions and your want of brotherly love have been a heavy burden upon me. Another Waldron, there has been a canker-woth of worldly pride and self-will in your heart, which must needs be cast away. You have made us all feel it—the church and me. You were too great a man for us; there was no one to stand against you; and I never dared to say it till now."

His voice fell into almost inarticulate whispers, and he paused for more strength. Perhaps never did a deacon feel more completely confounded and thunderstruck beside his pastor's death-bed than did Mr. Waldron; but it was not a time for him to protest against his judgment.

"As for you, dear brother Morley," continued the painful voice, "you have been a continual sorrow and heaviness of heart to me. Look at what you are doing. You are throwing away your life, which ought to have been a blessing to all about you. You have made Hester's life a grief to her."

"It is not I who have done it," replied John Morley, with a quivering face.

"Nay, but it is you," he urged; "surely the past should be forgotten. I am very sorrowful for Hester; she has had a sore burden to carry also. Will you not take it from her? Now you are all here, I commend her to you; for in me she will lose a friend, and she cannot afford to lose any. She has been like a very dear daughter unto me. You will all take care of Hester."

He did not seem to expect any answer, but

turned to Hester and smiled feebly upon her. A moment or two afterwards he resumed his speech.

"My child," he said, "I was to have received you into my church to-day. Surely I may do it now in the presence of these witnesses. Hester, I give you the right hand of fellowship, in token that you are received into the Church of Christ."

He laid his right hand in hers, and closed his weary eyelids, sinking back, as if exhausted, upon his pillow. Grant, who had stolen unperceived to the other side of the bed, placed his fingers upon his pulse, and made a sign to them to take Hester away. Carl bent down and put his mouth near to the ear of his dying colleague.

"I will stay with you till the end," he said.

"Ay, stay," the old man whispered; "I have need of you. I am still afraid."

It was a long night, and Carl passed it in scarcely interrupted reverie as he watched the last ebb of life receding slowly from the heart of this stranger, to whom he found himself united by so strong a tie. It was a night full of checks and chills upon his young enthusiasm. The charge even of this humble church had been too burdensome for its pastor. Towards the end he spoke often and incoherently of Hester, and was troubled for her, repeatedly recommending her to Grant and Carl. Then his voice sank into whispered murmurings, and breathed its last word in a tone which no ear could catch. Carl had become the sole pastor of the church at Little Aston.

CHAPTER THE FOURTH.

A FLASH OF LIGHT.

BREAKFAST was just finished, but the family had not yet dispersed, when Carl reached Aston Court next morning. There was a shade of embarrassment in Mr. Waldron's greeting, for he could not forget that this young man, who was under his patronage, had heard administered to him the sharpest rebuke it had ever been his lot to receive. Yet at bottom he was too true a man, and too sincere a Christian, to resent his dying pastor's reproach. He shook Carl's hand therefore with more warmth than usual, and looked cordially into his worn face, which was weary with the watching and the meditations of the night. Robert, who had been about to quit the table, lingered to listen to his report, with a secret impatience to hear what had occurred at the meeting the night before, and to ascertain whether Carl and Hester had yet seen one another. Miss Waldron was the first to inquire after the minister.

"He is dead," answered Carl, with the brevity of emotion.

"And what was the last utterance of our beloved pastor?" she asked. She had rather looked down

upon the meek and timid old man during his lifetime; but she possessed the common and morbid curiosity for knowing the last words of the dying.

"It was inarticulate," replied Carl evasively; "his voice failed him an hour or two before he died."

"But," persisted Miss Waldron, "there must have been some last sayings which were articulate before he lost his voice. The last words of dying saints are very precious, and they should be made the property of the church."

"He was speaking chiefly of two of the members of his church," said Carl, with reluctance; "it was his dying charge to me as his successor. He committed to my care those for whom he felt the greatest anxiety."

"And who might these be?" mused Miss Waldron; "*two* members of the church! We can be of use to you here. You know nothing of your flock as yet, but we know them. Whom did our dear pastor so specially commend to your charge?"

Carl looked round at each face with doubt and irresolution. If Miss Waldron had been alone he would not have hesitated to tell her all; but how could he mention John Morley and Hester before Robert? Mr. Waldron divined the reason of his reluctance, and would not yield to avoiding the utterance of John Morley's name.

"I can tell you, I believe," he said, addressing his daughter; "it would be Hester and her father."

A rapid tremor of agitation ran through Robert Waldron's frame, and he rose hurriedly from his chair as if to leave them altogether; but he only walked to the window, and stood looking out upon the terrace before it.

"But Hester is no member of the church," said Miss Waldron, almost peevishly; "and I want to know however she came to be present at the church-meeting last night."

"I gave her permission to be present," replied Mr. Waldron, in a mild deprecating tone; "and, my dear, Mr. Watson received her into the church last night before he died. It was no doubt informal; but I was present, and so was Mr. Bramwell, and her father. There was something very affecting in it, I assure you."

The tears stood in Mr. Waldron's eyes at the recollection. Everything which concerned Hester touched the softest part of his nature; and Miss Waldron would have been struck with utter amazement at her father's folly, if she could for a moment have seen into the close recesses of his heart.

"I never in all my life heard of such a thing," she exclaimed, pronouncing the words slowly and with marked emphasis; "what could you all have been thinking of? Hester Morley at the death-bed of Mr. Watson! That girl is the most singular girl I ever met with. I do not consider her fit for church-membership, as yet. She has the most

independent notions, and no clear faith in one doctrine. Poor girl! she has grown up under great disadvantages."

She stopped abruptly, for it was impossible to enumerate Hester's disadvantages before her brother, who was chafing and fuming inwardly, but who did not care to leave the room, as long as Hester was the topic of the conversation.

"What disadvantages?" asked Carl absently, speaking only because Miss Waldron paused.

She darted an apologetic and beseeching glance at Robert, who now turned round with a face dark with anger.

"Mr. Bramwell," he said in a tone which startled Carl from his absence of mind, "I suppose it is your right to learn the domestic history of your people, and I will leave you to hear that of the Morleys from my sister."

He walked out of the room without giving Carl time to answer; and Miss Waldron threw herself back in the chair, with her handkerchief to her eyes. Mr. Waldron, with an expression of shame and pain upon his face, was about to speak, when Carl interrupted him gently.

"I know it all," he said; "I knew it long before I had any thought of coming here. Grant wrote to me, and told me all he then knew, at the time he was attending Mr. Robert Waldron in Mr. Morley's house, about nine months ago."

Mr. Waldron regarded Carl with an air of profound astonishment, mingled with incredulity, as to whether he had heard him aright; and Miss Waldron dropped her handkerchief, and turned a bewildered gaze upon him.

"Attending my son in John Morley's house!" ejaculated Mr. Waldron; "what did you say, Mr. Bramwell?"

"It cannot be a secret to you," answered Carl, taken by surprise himself; "surely you knew it, Miss Waldron? Your brother was almost murdered at the door of Mr. Morley's house about nine months ago."

"Robert had an accident nine months ago," she said, "through which Mr. Grant nursed him; but it was at Bechbury, twenty miles from here."

"I have done wrong," cried Carl, with a look and tone of concern; "but it could not occur to me for an instant that you did not both know the facts. I knew that he wished the secret kept from the townspeople, which I very well understood. I beg of you not to betray my indiscretion to him, if you wish me to gain his esteem and friendship; it would only prejudice him against me."

He spoke with extreme earnestness, and addressed himself rather to Mr. Waldron than to his daughter. With her he felt sure that he was safe.

"But what is it?" asked Mr. Waldron, with impetuosity; "I must know the whole of it now."

What did you say? Robert almost murdered at John Morley's door!"

"Grant can tell you all about it," said Carl; "but if he will not, I will read his letter again, or put it into your hands, on condition that you do not betray either of us to your son. If I could see any good to result from letting him know of it, I would make no condition at all; but I do not."

"I will go and question Grant this moment," exclaimed Mr. Waldron, hurrying away with more than ordinary energy, and leaving his daughter alone with Carl. There had been very much to excite and trouble her in the foregoing conversation, for Robert had already insinuated to her his own apprehensions relating to Carl and Hester. It had been done with caution and *finesse* , but there was a dread in the depths of her own heart with which it exactly coincided. It would be hard indeed if he were so soon to cease to belong exclusively to herself. Carl drew nearer, and appealed to her in a tone of earnest but deferential importunity.

"Mr. Watson committed Hester Morley to the care of Grant and myself," he said, "but what can we do for her? It is you, who are so good, and to whom the Master has entrusted so many talents, who should be the friend of this lonely girl. I do not know what calamity Mr. Watson feared for her, but there seemed some special dread about her future. What could I do to protect her from sorrow and danger? I will indeed be her friend, but you are wiser and better than I, a woman like herself; your heart has a purity and tenderness unknown to man. You will be her friend, even as you are already so generously and so nobly mine?"

He spoke with eloquent warmth, and approached her so closely that his hand nearly touched hers. There was a peculiar fascination about the mere presence of a young and pleasing woman, such as she appeared to him; and this morning he felt more than usually the need of a woman's gentle ministry to chase away the gloomy impressions of the night.

"Ah!" sobbed Miss Waldron, with very real and very bitter tears, "I am so much your friend that I tremble for you, so impulsive and so inexperienced as you are. I am older than you, and have seen much, both in the church and in the world. I foresee that you may attain to great eminence and usefulness; but a single false step at the outset of your career may become your ruin. Be warned in time. I am frank with you because I feel a great regard for you. Leave the charge of poor Hester Morley to me, and do not take too great an interest yourself in her welfare. She is young and foolish, and might draw you into a difficulty it would be hard to escape from."

Miss Waldron succeeded in pronouncing these sentences in a tone penetrated with candour and a deep concern in him. The hot, quick blood of his

sensitive nature had mounted to his face, and a spark of almost angry resentment had kindled in his eyes; but he could not steel himself against her agitation and tears. There was subtle, delicious flattery in this warm interest of a woman, his elder and superior, which compensated for the gall of the admonition. When she raised her eyes to him, sparkling through her tears, they met a glance in his which made her heart glow with a sensation altogether new to her. Her eyelids dropped and her lips trembled, but she mastered her emotion sufficiently to resume the conversation in a somewhat lighter tone.

"I speak for your sake," she said. "Hester has a certain amount of beauty, which would make it excusable for a man young as you are to be attracted by it. But I know of no one so unsuitable to become a prominent member of any church, such as a minister's wife should be. Of course, some day you will fall in love and marry; but I trust not with Hester Morley. She is visionary and unsound in the faith; she is not to be trusted. There is not the spirit of the daily cross in her. Though she is in the church, she belongs to the world. Her only friend is a frivolous Frenchwoman of the lower orders—a Papist; and Hester herself owns that she makes no effort to convert her. She says that she is too old for change, and too dark to understand our pure and lofty creed. I shall insist some day upon bearing the bread of life to this famishing soul; for Hester, who sees her frequently, does not feed her with a single crumb. You can judge how unfit she is for a post of honour in the vineyard. Therefore I warn you beforehand. 'As a jewel of gold in a swine's snout, so is a fair woman which is without discretion.'"

With this harsh quotation hurled at Hester, Miss Waldron concluded her admonition, and Carl remained silent. Seeing the impression she had produced, she recommended him, with an air of sisterly sweetness, to seek some repose before entering on the necessary preparations for the services of his first Sunday as pastor of the church. Carl obeyed with alacrity, and shut himself up in his own room for the rest of the morning.

CHAPTER THE FIFTH. GRANT'S OPINION.

IN the meantime Mr. Waldron was hastening with all speed to find Grant, before he left his lodgings to make his morning call upon his patients, whose number was increasing with fair rapidity under the prestige of Mr. Waldron's patronage. He burst upon him just as he was preparing to go out, and lost no time in beating about the bush. As a statesman Mr. Waldron had known no tactics, except that of asking straightforward and pungent questions; and he tried no other means now. Grant was as frank as himself, and having a

greater respect for him than for his son, and being rather glad at Carl's inadvertence, he soon put Mr. Waldron into possession of all the facts he knew.

"But what rancour there must be in John Morley's soul!" cried Mr. Waldron, sinking into a chair, and resting both his hands upon the arms of it. "I can barely credit it, Grant. Were you convinced then, both of you, that he, and nobody else, could have struck the blow?"

"Is there any other man that owes him such a grudge?" asked Grant bluntly.

"Oh, I don't know," he answered, in accents almost peevish, and with a gesture as if he would have nothing to do with it. "My son has wounded me to the very quick, and I have ceased to seek out his faults. He will have to bear the consequences himself, here and hereafter."

His upright head sank a little on his breast, and his eyes, bright and undimmed still, met Grant's regard ruthfully.

"You are too hard upon him," said Grant, with an honest plainness which was as honey to Mr. Waldron. "I would stake my head that this is the only folly of which he has been guilty; and he was little more than a boy when he fell into it. He was four years younger than I am, and, dear me! what I might have done if I'd been rich and idle, and an only son, like him!"

Mr. Waldron breathed more calmly, and the rigid muscles about his mouth relaxed into the expression which generally served him as a smile. But his mind recurred to John Morley.

"Yet how could you account for him taking you into his own house?" he asked.

"He could do nothing else," answered Grant. "I walked into the nearest house with your son in my arms, and Hester had let me in before he knew anything of it. To screen himself he was obliged to let us remain. Neither of us believes that he had any previous design to attack him; but seeing him sauntering about the street which he was forbidden to enter, John Morley was overcome by a sudden access of revenge and passion. A blow struck more warily must have killed him; half an inch, ay, the tenth of an inch would have done it."

"But what weapon did he use?" asked Mr. Waldron, shuddering.

"Some days afterwards," Grant replied, "I saw in his workshop several iron bars, from a foot and a half to four feet in length. They are used for screwing up the binding-presses. If one of these happened to be at hand it would form a likely weapon."

"I am afraid it must be true," said Mr. Waldron.

"I am sure of it," replied Grant.

"But, how then?" he exclaimed, "you choose this man for your friend, you visit him daily, believing him all the while to be a murderer!"

"No more a murderer than you or I," said Grant calmly. "I have studied John Morley; he is as

soft-hearted as a woman, always apt to be overwhelmed by the sin and misery of the world. To him there must be a constant pressure of despair, from the thought of the sin and misery of the wife he has loved and lost. If he knew for certain that she was dead, half his burden would fall off. When he saw your son, a frenzy seized him, and I do not wonder at the blow he struck. In many countries it would pass for a virtue rather than a crime."

"But he is a member of the church," said Mr. Waldron, "and attends the means of grace."

"Just now," answered Grant, "a long walk every day would be the best means of grace for him, and it would do him more good to be a member of the Alpine Club. The truth is, he is crusted over with morbid melancholy amounting to monomania. Why, I should commit a score of murders if I lived as he does, in the eternal gloom of that house! So would you, Mr. Waldron."

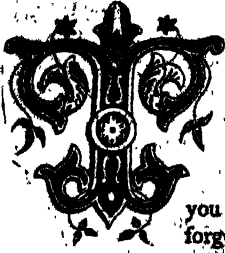
"Hush! there he is," cried Mr. Waldron.

In a window nearly opposite them could be seen the head of John Morley, set in the blackened and decayed frame of the casement. He stood motionless, looking upwards with blank eyes which evidently saw nothing. The deep lines in his face seemed more furrowed than ever, and his whole aspect was one of grim and perpetual hopelessness. He glanced round once, and his eyes appeared to sweep the full range of their sight, as if searching for some object which he had lost, but which he had long since despaired of finding. Mr. Waldron watched him with painful and contending emotions.

"Grant," he said, "I'd give him half my possessions if they would do him any good. Yet he almost killed my son, my only son! I feel nearer hating him than I ever felt towards any man. You do not know how a father feels. Why, it was only last night I shook the hand that had been raised against my boy's life! I hope I am a Christian, God deliver me in his abundant grace from the devil! But to think what it would have been if Robert had been murdered, and I had never heard him speak again! He was such a good boy once, Grant; a good, affectionate, conscientious boy was my Robert. Bob I called him then. And that man yonder had nearly killed him! I wish he would take half my fortune, and go away out of the country. But to-morrow I shall see him at chapel, and next week he will stand beside me at the grave of our old pastor. I had better go home and think it all over quietly by myself; and may God give me grace to prove myself a true Christian."

He wrung Grant's hand convulsively, and took a last furtive glance at the grey, despairing face in the window opposite. Then he retraced his steps homewards, and, like Carl Bramwell, shut himself up in his room alone, to think over the discovery of John Morley's crime and Robert's danger.

PICTURES AND THEIR FRAMES.



HERE is more "in" a frame than the mere work of art which it enfolds. Take the best-executed painting and divest it of its gilded surroundings, and it will remind you of a "fashionable" who has forgotten to include a neat shirt-collar and a well-starched cravat

in his otherwise highly finished toilette. The ordinary visitor to a public exhibition of paintings, unless he be by trade a carver and gilder, pays but little regard to the decorative part of the show, and yet if this important element were absent how very conspicuous it would appear! A gallery of unframed works of art would be as dull and confusing as a theatrical performance unaided by scenic effects. No artist, however great his reputation, considers his handiwork complete until his favourite carver comes to put the finishing touch in the shape of a gilded proscenium. A handsome frame "covers" (and too often encircles!) a multitude of defects.

"Wait till you come and see it in the frame!" is the apology of many an aspirant whose frameless production stands under your hypercritical eye. But when framing-day arrives what a difference is there! The work which seemed to you crude and insignificant in point of size has redoubled its attractions for you now. Dazzled by the blaze of "burnish" and "ormolu," you discover beauties which were not there before. There is a tone, a harmony, a connection, a finish which you cannot account for. Possibly you may attribute the improvements to the artist's increased labours.

He has, you think, so to speak, put the "spurt" on at the last, and by means of his varnishes, his mediums, his glazes, or his scumbles, he has succeeded in producing in one day all that you considered was wanting the day before. If you are a patron you will feel more disposed to open your cheque-book to the framed production, than you would have felt if you had seen it under less favourable circumstances. Artists in general look forward with great pleasure to the day when their picture shall be sufficiently advanced for the framing stage of it.

Many painters find it impossible to finish their production before they have viewed it in its frame, and on this account most of them work upon their picture in that condition.

There are fashions in frames as there are in everything else. Our painting grandfathers were more lavish with their pictorial adornments than we, as is observed in old family pictures at ancient mansions. Their frames, like their coaches, were heavier-looking and more cumbersome than are ours. They delighted in ponderous scroll-work, flowers, and shells; and even Cupids, Venuses, and

birds were not infrequently included. The Italians—and notably the Florentines—at one time made carving and gilding a special branch of the fine arts, and the Florentine frame, carved entirely out of the solid wood, and highly burnished in every part, is still a favourite pattern with the Tuscans.

In the galleries of the Uffizi and Pitti Palaces at Florence, many curious examples of ancient carving are shown. The far-famed picture by Raphael of the Madonna della Seggiola is encompassed by one of the widest and most elaborate frames ever constructed. The proportions of this massive ornament far exceed the dimensions of its priceless contents. The portion nearest the picture is oval-shaped, the outside being square. Broad leaves, huge flowers, Cupids, and other decorations enter into its composition, and the gilding being kept scrupulously clean, this remarkable piece of "furniture," as it might be called, forms a most conspicuous object in the gallery.

* Equally elaborate frames, though less tasteful than that just described, may be seen in some of the art-collections in this country. Our National Gallery contains numerous examples, and here will be found those rare architectural devices which, centuries ago, were so closely allied with most paintings intended for secular purposes. Gilding in the days of our ancestors was indeed considered such an important element in religious art, that not only the frame but the entire background of the picture was covered with a thin layer of gold.

A very remarkable specimen of frame-carving is at present on view at the Bethnal Green Museum. This frame reminds the spectator of a Louis Quatorze console table, or an elaborate looking-glass. Lost in admiration for the frame, the visitor is altogether oblivious of the modest portrait of an Italian lady which it embellishes, but sadly overwhelms.

Our modern exhibition frame is less pretentious, though our living painters will tell you that they find it equally costly. Every artist has his own favourite pattern, but modern exhibitions have prescribed certain framing rules, and the generality of show-pictures are framed more or less after the same mould. Occasionally an innovator appears with a "fancy" pattern made after his own design, in which some of the characteristics of his picture are symbolised in gold. Followers of what has been termed the Eccentric school exhibit their eccentricities even in their frames, and birds, beasts, flowers, and fishes not infrequently participate in the gilded production.

The shape of what is technically called the "flatt," or interior margin of frames, is sometimes varied to suit the subject of a painting. Thus we have many varieties of the dome-shaped flatt, the oval, the Gothic, and the triangular. Sometimes

the flatt—which, being usually nearest the picture, is considered an important part of the frame—is more or less wide. One artist has a preference for exceedingly broad flats, another uses a narrow one, or altogether eschews a margin. Frames consisting of the broad flatt only, or of a flatt slightly skirted by an ornamental border, are not uncommon.

For this order of frame the eccentric gentlemen before named have a strange partiality. The gilding of these frames is laid on in such a manner as to show the rough grain of the oak-wood which forms the basis, and in order to vary the monotony of this gilded oasis, ornaments resembling large buttons are placed upon it at intervals, and in some cases colour itself corresponding with the general "tone" of the picture is fantastically introduced.

The narrow "double flatt" is the most popular style with artists, as it is said to increase the depth of the frame, and consequently lends distance to the picture. A deeply hollowed frame is indeed a favourite form with most of the profession, especially with followers of the French and Dutch schools.

The modern system of preserving the outsides of frames square and level—that is to say, without any projecting ornament—originates in a certain law prescribed by the Royal Academy, in which exhibitors are warned that "excessive breadth in frames, as well as projecting mouldings, may prevent pictures obtaining the situation they otherwise merit, and oval frames should be avoided, as they are difficult of arrangement." In the case of water-colour painters the law is even more stringent. "Frames of miniatures," it is stated, "whose greatest dimension is six inches, must not exceed two inches in width and one inch in depth, and in no instance must exceed two inches and a half in width and one in depth. Nor will any miniatures be admitted in outer cases, unless they are made to fit close to the gilt frames. Gold mountings, arched tops, and coloured borderings of every description are inadmissible."

These regulations are, however, not always observed, and, especially in the case of small oil-paintings, the size of the frame often exceeds the dimensions of the picture.

The carver and gilder has a technical name for every style of frame which the artist may select. If you go into his store, he will show you a long narrow slab, upon which are arranged patterns or sections of frames for his customers to choose from. There is the popular "Alhambra" pattern, consisting of a moulding fretted and chased in imitation of the Arabesque. There are endless varieties of this highly approved pattern. Next in importance is the "Greek," which exhibits for its leading characteristic a Greek border or "key," and is sometimes accompanied by an outer moulding, whose surface is hollowed out, but which claims no other adornment than a series of parallel

lines, or "flutings," as they are called; each line, or fluting, being carefully burnished, and the spaces between "ornol'd" in "dead" gold. Some frames are almost exclusively represented by the fluted pattern, the monotony being relieved by an inner border of "beads," or an outer rim, showing an arrangement of laurels, oak-leaves, or a simple spiral ribbon. There are also "Egyptian" and "Byzantine" frames, which, however, often bear but a faint resemblance to these orders.

Ornamented projecting corners are, for the reason already stated, almost entirely out of date, and the extreme angles of frames have little adornment besides a flat leaf, or a crossed "ribbon," which serves chiefly to conceal the "mitre," or diagonal crevice formed by the joint.

Gold, and white cardboard "mounts," form no inconsiderable item in the framing art. These mounts, or "passepartouts," as they are sometimes called, are used chiefly for water-colour paintings or for crayon and other drawings. They are circular, square, dome-shaped, or oval, to suit the work which they encompass. The virtues of a drawing or a sketch are greatly enhanced after having been viewed under the favourable auspices of a white mount and a clear, spotless glass.

As an instance of the value which artists attach to their frames, it may not be out of place here to cite an incident in the writer's recollection. A certain well-known landscape painter had such an inordinate fancy for viewing his picture in a gilt frame, that he invariably framed his work after the first colouring and general effect had been "rubbed in," and in this condition contrived to finish his painting. My friend had a reputation for rapid, though by no means slovenly, work; and so facile was he with the brush, that it is reported that in less than a week a large and important work had been conceived, completed, and, what is better, disposed of. This expeditious painter was usually represented in most of the leading exhibitions throughout the United Kingdom; but on one occasion the day for "sending in" contributions had altogether escaped his memory. Some friends who entered his studio on the appointed day in question reminded him of his omission.

"Bless my soul!" exclaimed our friend, "so this is the day, is it? How many hours does it want before the doors are closed?"

"About twelve," replied one of his visitors, adding, "but if you have any work in hand, I must remind you that you have only six hours of daylight for finishing it in."

"Then be good enough to reach me that frame."

The frame was produced and placed upon the easel. The artist then looked about for a clean canvas to fit into it, but in vain, no canvas of the required size was to be found.

"Will one of you fellows run round to my colour-man's and bring me a twenty-sixteen canvas?"

Some one volunteered, and presently returned with a bran-new white "cloth."

"Now, be good enough all of you to make yourselves scarce till six o'clock, when you may return, if you like, and see my exhibition picture." His guests obeyed, but not before the great man had dashed on with a full brush the outline of his work.

At six, to the minute, his guests returned, not to discover the artist immersed in his labours, but to find him quietly seated in his arm-chair, smoking a

favourite pipe, caressing a fat bulldog, and contemplating his wet but perfectly finished masterpiece.

"Lucky you're punctual," he observed, without removing his gaze from the landscape before him. "The man called half an hour ago to inquire if I had any picture to send for exhibition, and I requested him to wait below till you returned."

That same landscape was hung in a good place in the exhibition; and the frame, which had been the origin of the hasty production, bore what is more pleasing to the artist's eye than any frame—the "star" which indicates—*sic itur ad astra*—that his picture is "Sold."

THE TALE HE TOLD.



LISTEN, little wife;
On my knee
Lay that small head down,
Curly, crisp, and brown
So; now let it be
I've a tale to tell—
(Restless child,
Wanting kisses now!
There, then, on your brow.
Are you reconciled?)

Once there lived a man,
Poor like me,
One who painted well
Things that wouldn't sell
Many such there be.

Off he told himself
(Wretched dog!)
He must live his life
Barren of a wife;
She would be a clog.

Being thus resolved,
Out one day,
All by chance he met,
Walking in the wet—
(What's the matter, pray?)

Met a little girl,
Dirty, drenched;
And her eyes soft blue
Pierced him through and through:
All his wisdom quenched.

Trembling on a stone,
Raised above
Foul, black streams of mud,
There the maiden stood:
Stood and stole his love.

Well, not stole (be still!)
Yet 'twas so.

As he took her hand,
Helped her to the land,
Swift she dealt the blow:

Stabbed him to the heart
With the touch
Of those fingers white,
Supple, soft, and slight.
(Saw you ever such?)

Hands so small and warm!
(Put them down!)
Did the maiden miss
That swift stolen kiss?
(Nay then, never frown.)

It was wrong, I know,
Impolite;
But you see, sweet life,
He only kissed his wife,
As I do to-night.

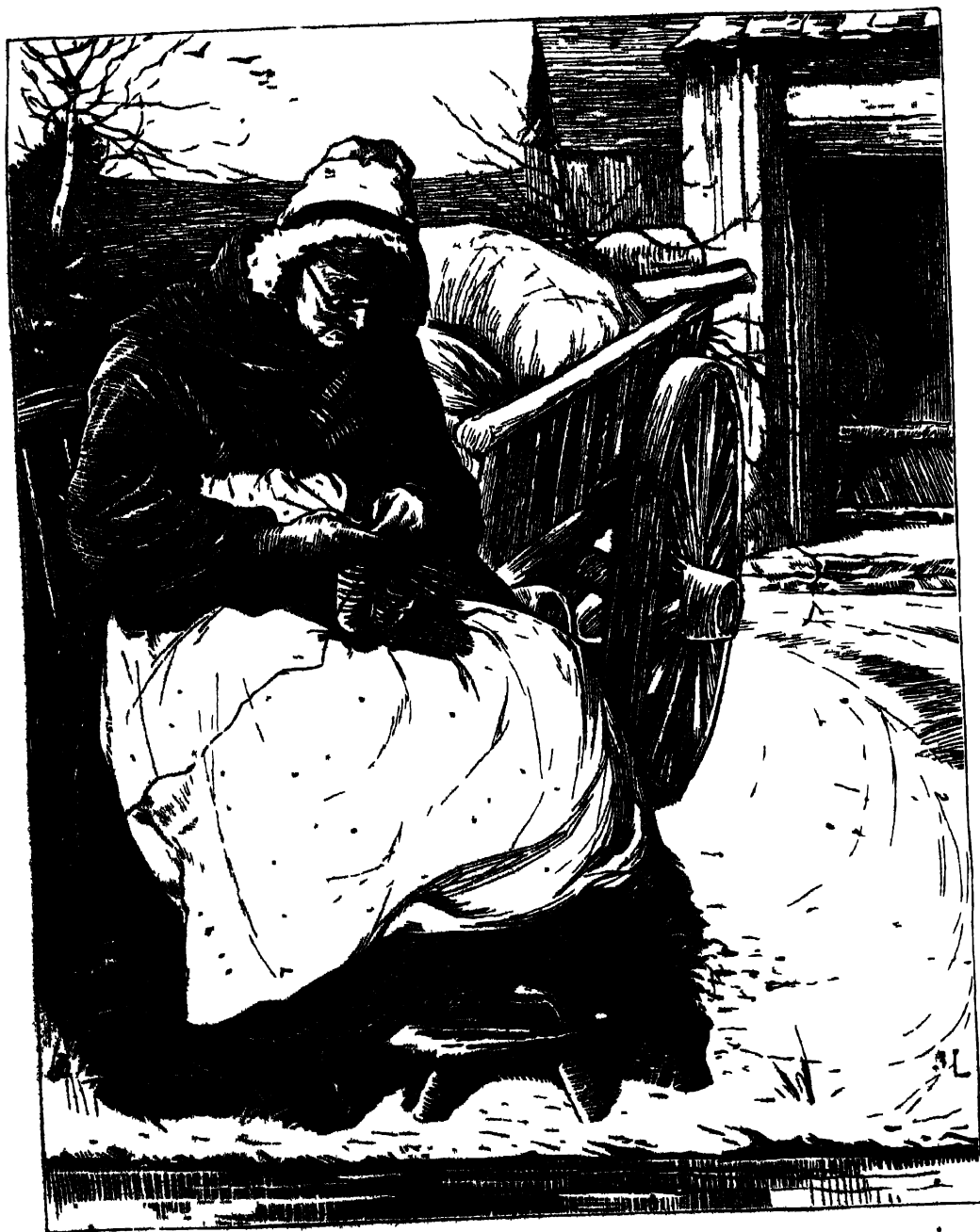
For he brought her home,
Set her there,
Drew the fairy face,
Strove with toil to trace
Every feature fair;

Till the picture shone
Like a sun,
And with joyful awe
That poor painter saw
Sudden glory won.

And as I've been told—
Nay, I'm sure—
That sweet picture sold
For its weight in gold,
Flung upon the floor.

And the selfish man,
Knowing well
That, without the aid
Of that blue-eyed maid,
He could never sell—

Pictures good or bad,
Both were nil—
Kept her all his life,
Kept her for a wife,
Keeps her, darling, still.



“*BEHIND THE, MILL STREAM*”

DISAPPOINTED.



"TRYING FORGOTTEN."

IN the opera house on the first of May,
While Patti's notes were ringing,
As cold and fair as a statue there

She sat amid the singing,
With a cross of care on her beauty rare
Its bitter shadow flinging.

There were jewels of light in her locks of gold,
 Wet jewels on her lashes.
 You could not tell, look ever so well,
 Which gleamed in brighter flashes,
 The gem to sell, or the tear that fell,
 As grief on grandeur clashes.

For that single night in the sad, slow year
 The weary heart had waited ;
 And she kept that night in her constant sight

On throne inviolated ;
 When her trusty knight his love could plight,
 And prove it unabated.

Oh, trysting forgotten ! Oh, watch all in vain !
 While Patti's notes are swelling,
 He has thrown away, in his careless play,
 That love all love excelling ;
 And the first of May is a barren day
 Of Love's entombment telling.

THEO. GIFT.

CONTEMPT OF COURT.



THE summary proceedings in the cases of Messrs. Onslow, Whalley, and Skipworth have set the public thinking as to how far the majesty of the law may assert itself over the conduct of the private individual ; further attention being called to the severe sentence imposed by Mr. Justice

Lawson on the editor of the *Ulster Examiner*, for certain comments upon a trial ;

whilst a recent judgment in the Court of Queen's Bench was sufficiently unanimous to prove to the public that the judges of the superior courts are determined that they, and they alone, shall have power to inflict fine or imprisonment, or both, upon such delinquents as shall commit contempt within the jurisdiction of the courts.

What a contempt of court is, how and to what extent it may be punished, it is intended in this article to explain.

"A contempt," says Viner, "is a disobedience to the court, or an opposing or despising the authority, justice, or dignity thereof. It commonly consists in a party's doing otherwise than he is enjoined to do, or not doing what he is commanded or required by the process, order, or decree of the court."

The old jurisdiction of the one supreme court was introduced after the Conquest, in which the grand justiciary acted as viceroy ; out of this court were erected the Courts of Queen's Bench, Common Pleas, and Exchequer, and the foundation of the authority of these courts, as to contempts committed in court and contempts out of court, having a tendency to affect the administration of justice, was the presumption that they were part of the great court, or *Aula regis*. In this latter court it is said that the king in person dispensed justice ; and the power of committing for contempt was an emanation of the royal authority, for any contempt of the court would be a contempt of the sovereign.

"Contempts are either direct," says Blackstone,

"which openly insult or resist the powers of the court, or the persons of the judges who preside there ; or else are consequential, which, without such gross insolence or direct opposition, plainly tend to create an universal disregard of their authority."

We will take the principal instances *seriatim*, and explain as we proceed.

1. Contempts committed by inferior judges and magistrates, by acting unjustly, oppressively, or irregularly in administering justice, or by disobeying writs issuing out of the superior courts, by proceeding in a cause after it is put a stop to or removed.

The superior courts, and especially the Queen's Bench, have a general superintendence over all inferior jurisdictions, so any corrupt or iniquitous practices of subordinate judges are contempts of the superintending authority.

2. Those committed by sheriffs, bailiffs, gaolers, and other officers of the court, by abusing the process of the law, or deceiving the parties by acts of oppression, extortion, or collusive behaviour, or by any culpable neglect of duty.

3. Those committed by counsel, or by attorneys and solicitors who are officers of the respective courts, involving fraud and corruption, injustice to their clients, or other dishonest practice.

The malpractice of the officers reflects some dishonour on their employers, and if frequent or unpunished, might create among the people a disgust against the courts themselves.

4. Those committed by jurymen in collateral matters relating to the discharge of their office ; such as making default when summoned ; refusing to be sworn, or to give any verdict ; eating or drinking without leave of the court, and especially at the cost of either party ; but not in the mere exercise of their judicial capacities, as by giving a false or erroneous verdict.

5. Those committed by witnesses, by making default when summoned ; refusing to be sworn, or on examination to answer a proper question, or prevaricating in their evidence when sworn.

6. Those committed by parties to any suit or

proceeding before the court; as by disobedience to a rule or order, made in the progress of a cause; by non-observance of the award of an arbitrator or umpire, after the submission has been made a rule of court.

7. Those committed by any persons, including peers, when accompanied with violence, such as forcible rescue and the like; or when they import a disobedience to the great prerogative writs of prohibition, habeas corpus, and the rest.

Some of these contempts may arise in the face of the court, as by rude contemptuous behaviour; by obstinacy, perverseness, or prevarication; by breach of the peace, or any wilful disturbance whatever. Others, in absence of the party; as by disobeying or treating with disrespect the Queen's writ, or the rules or process of the court; by perverting such writ or process to the purposes of private malice, extortion, or injustice; by speaking or writing contemptuously of the judges, acting in their judicial capacity; by printing a false account, or even a true one, in disobedience to an order of the court, of a cause there depending; and by anything, in short, demonstrating a gross want of that regard and respect, which when once courts of justice are deprived of, their authority (so necessary for the good order of the kingdom) is entirely lost among the people.

The above are offences which constitute contempts of court; it must now be considered how such contempts are punished.

If the contempt be committed in the face of the court, the offender may be instantly apprehended and imprisoned at the discretion of the judge, without any further proof or examination. But in matters that arise at a distance, and of which the court cannot have so perfect a knowledge, unless by the confession of the party or the testimony of others, and if the judges upon affidavit see sufficient ground to suspect that a contempt has been committed, they either make a rule on the suspected, to "show cause" why an attachment should not issue against him; or, in flagrant cases of contempt, the attachment issues in the first instance without allowing him to "show cause."

This process of attachment is only intended to bring the party into court, and when there, he must either stand committed, or put in bail, in order to answer upon oath to such interrogatories as shall be administered to him for the information of the court, with respect to the circumstances of the contempt.

These interrogatories are in the nature of a charge or accusation, and must, by the course of the court, be exhibited within the first four days. If any interrogatory be improper, however, the defendant may refuse to answer it, and move the court to have it struck out.

If the party can clear himself upon oath, he is

discharged; but if perjured, he may be prosecuted for the perjury.

If he confess the contempt, the court will proceed to punish him by fine or imprisonment, or both; but if he wilfully and obstinately refuse to answer, or answer in an evasive manner, he is then clearly guilty of a high and repeated contempt, to be punished at the discretion of the court.

By an old law dating centuries back, the punishment of death was inflicted upon any man who should strike another or draw his sword in court; and even now-a-days, as the law stands, the loss of the offending limb is the punishment prescribed for such a contempt. A rescue, also, of a prisoner from any of the said courts, without striking a blow, is punishable with perpetual imprisonment and forfeiture of goods, and of the profits of lands during life; as no blow, however, has been struck, the amputation of the hand is excused.

An affray or riot near a court, but out of its actual view, is punishable with fine and imprisonment, an illustration of which occurred when Lord Thane and several others were prosecuted by the Attorney-General for a riot at Maidstone, when one O'Connor was being tried for high-treason by a special commission. Lord Kenyon, the judge, was doubtful whether he was not bound to pronounce judgment of amputation of the right hand; but in the end the prisoners had the benefit of the doubt, and they were sentenced to a fine and imprisonment.

The above statements of fact hold good as far as the superior courts are concerned; with regard to the county courts, the law of contempt as capable of being wielded by the inferior judges was for a long time doubtful, until in January last it was decided by the Court of Queen's Bench.

In a certain case tried at a county court, the judge made some strong observations on the attorney for the plaintiff in the cause. Whether the observations were justified it matters not, but the attorney wrote a letter, which was published in a local paper, commenting upon the conduct of the judge, and saying: "The statement was a monstrosity and, as I can now say without fear of an arbitrary or tyrannical abuse of power, an untruth."

On reading this, the judge caused a citation to be served on the attorney, to appear at the next court to answer for his contempt.

The attorney, however, applied at Judges' Chambers in London for a prohibition on the citation. Mr. Justice Quain referred the matter to the Court of Queen's Bench, and in the meantime stayed proceedings.

The case was argued out fully by learned counsel, and in the end all three judges, including Lord Chief Justice Cockburn, declared that, although a

county court judge might fine or imprison a man for contempt in the court itself, he had no power to punish outside his jurisdiction. For, as the Chief Justice remarked, were the law to be as the county court judge understood it, a county court judge could, for a contempt committed in the face of the court, imprison the offender for seven days, or fine him five pounds; whereas, for a contempt out of court he might fine him several hundreds, or commit him for months or even years.

The following section of an Act of Parliament will be useful to the reader in following out the reasons in point:—

"If any person shall wilfully insult the judge, or any juror, or any bailiff, clerk, or officer of the said court for the time being, during his sitting or attendance in court, or in going to or returning from the court, or shall willingly interrupt the proceedings of the court, or otherwise misbehave in court, it shall be lawful for any bailiff or officer of the court, with or without the assistance of any other person, by order of the judge, to take such offender into custody, and detain him until the rising of the court; and the judge shall have power, if he shall think fit, by a warrant under his hand and sealed with the seal of the court, to commit any such offender to any prison to which he has power to commit, for any time not exceeding seven days, or to impose upon any such offender a fine not exceeding five pounds for every such offence, and, in default of payment thereof, to commit the offender to any such prison as aforesaid, for any time not exceeding seven days, unless the fine be sooner paid."

The same punishment is accorded by the Act to any person assaulting any officer of the court while in the execution of his duty, and also to any one attempting a rescue of goods levied under the process of the court.

As we have already stated, not even barristers, whilst conducting a case, are exempt from the judicial thunderbolt. The case which Mr. —, barrister-at-law, brought before the Court of Queen's Bench well illustrates this point.

In this case Mr. — was engaged as counsel to defend a person who was indicted for larceny at the Middlesex sessions, before Mr. Payne, who was acting as judge. What happened in the course of the trial we will give from Mr. Payne's affidavit.

Mr. —, it appears, believing that a certain witness for the prosecution had told a lie, insinuated as much, whereupon the foreman of the jury openly stated that counsel had no right to say so; to which unaccustomed retort Mr. — replied, "You had better not get into collision with me, sir."

To this the foreman said never a word; and the case for the prosecution was brought to a close.

Mr. — then rose to address the jury for the

defence; and, in a state of great excitement, began his address thus:—

"I thank God, there is more than one jurymen to determine whether the prisoner stole these articles, for if there was only one, and that one the foreman, from what has transpired to-day there is no doubt what the result would be;" adding subsequently that the foreman ought to be removed from the box, and another put in his place.

The judge here interfered, and asked the learned and irate counsel to withdraw the expressions, as they insinuated that the foreman of the jury would find the prisoner guilty on account of the previous collision with his counsel. Mr. —, however, instead of withdrawing the offensive words, repeated them, and the case proceeded.

After the verdict, the chief judge of the sessions, summoned by Mr. Payne, entered the court and said:

"Mr. —, now the case is over, surely you must see the impropriety of such remarks as you made."

Mr. —, however, would not or could not see the impropriety, and declined to apologise, whereupon he was adjudged to have committed a contempt of the court, and was fined twenty pounds.

"This shall not rest here," quoth the learned gentleman to the learned judge; "I shall bring the matter under the notice of Sir George Grey, and very probably your removal from the bench will be the result."

No such public calamity, however, took place; and when Mr. — brought his case before the Court of Queen's Bench, the Lord Chief Justice and three other judges considered that he had been properly fined.

The privilege of counsel for the benefit of suitors and the public is of course wide; and, as Mr. Justice Blackburn remarked, "it requires considerable evidence to make out that language, which would be within the privilege of counsel if used for the purpose of defending his client, was really used for the purpose of insulting a jurymen in revenge for a previous quarrel." Mr. Payne drew that conclusion, and the court accepted it.

The proceedings which led to the appearance of Messrs. Whalley and Onslow before the Queen's Bench, and the circumstances which preceded the temporary residence of Mr. Skipworth in Holloway Prison, are fresh in the minds of all; but with the reasons for the incarceration of Mr. Daniel M'Alcese, at Belfast, the public is hardly as familiar.

The commission opened at Belfast on the 20th of March last, and there were an unprecedented number of cases for trial, arising from the riots of August last. A number of persons had been found guilty of riot and assault; but the judge, Mr. Justice Lawson, did not pass sentence on any of those who would be punished by imprisonment, but reserved them until the close of the assizes, because each case

required to be weighed not only by itself, but in relation to other cases.

On the 24th, two men were indicted under the "Whiteboy Act," for rising and appearing in arms, were convicted, and sentenced to seven years' penal servitude.

The following day an article appeared in the *Ulster Examiner*, commenting on the severity of the judge, and asserting that the evidence upon which the prisoners had been convicted was far from circumstantial.

This article was followed by another, which finished with these words:—"If it is supposed that, by the infliction of penal servitude upon certain members of the Catholic body in Belfast, the remainder are to be cowed into a base subjection to an intolerant and ignorant mob, no greater mistake was ever made by those in authority."

Mr. Justice Lawson took immediate steps and summoned Mr. Daniel M'Alcese, the sub-editor and publisher of the *Ulster Examiner*, before him, and pronounced judgment:—

"If articles such as these were to pass unnoticed, I should scarcely be surprised if Belfast were to become again the scene of civil war, even while the representatives of her Majesty are in the town, and thus the scenes be re-enacted which have

been again and again proved in this court. Class alienated from class, carefully separated from the cradle to the grave, Catholics and Protestants obliged to occupy different quarters of the town, and each with ruthless barbarity expelling the other if they venture to intrude. To discourage all attempts made by writing and otherwise to perpetuate such a state of things, is the duty of every good subject of our gracious Queen. It is the duty of the bench to repress with a firm hand such attempts to paralyse the administration of justice, and, above all things, to protect the humble juror in the discharge of his unpaid and laborious duties. Although I cannot reach the author of these articles, who remains in concealment and leaves another to answer for the consequences, I must pronounce such a sentence upon you as will vindicate the majesty of the law. The sentence of the court is that you be adjudged guilty of contempt, and that for such contempt you be imprisoned for four calendar months, and that you do pay a fine of two hundred and fifty pounds to the Queen."

It will not have escaped the reader's notice that the method adopted of making the defendant answer upon oath to a criminal charge is only pursued in cases of contempt of court.

INNER TEMPLE.

POETICAL JUSTICE.

IN FIVE CHAPTERS.—CHAPTER THE FIRST.

HOW FRANK GRAINGER CAME TO BE CALLED "THE DOCTOR."



FRANK GRAINGER was the fourth son of a man who earned a large income and lived up to it, saving nothing. He had insured his life, indeed, for a good round sum, sufficient to provide comfortably for his widow if he died first, but he had no idea of saving a fortune for his children. His father had left

him nothing, and he had got on very well: let the next generation do the same. The girls—there were three—were to live with their mother if they did not marry, and share the insurance-money between them at her death. The boys received what are popularly called "the best educations," were plentifully provided with pocket-money, and lived when at home like young dukes, or—or—who are the other pampered mortals?—say, the sons of fashionable tailors.

They were likewise at liberty to select their own professions, barring one, the army. Mr. Grainger had a prejudice against that; he said, with absurd exaggeration, that any young man who tried to live in the army upon less than three hundred a year, in addition to his pay, would be sure to come to

utter ruin. I suppose that we are all prone to judge by our own practical experience, and Mr. Grainger having known three contemporaries who had made bad endings through holding commissions in crack regiments, and competing with richer men than themselves, assumed that result to be the natural one.

With such strong opinions upon this matter, it was perhaps inconsistent of Mr. Grainger to allow his sons horses to ride, guns to shoot with, private boats on the river, unlimited credit at the family shops; but who is consistent? Are you, sir? Mr. Grainger worked hard for his money, and insisted upon enjoying it, and his way of deriving pleasure from gold and silver was to see those around him getting all they wanted with it.

So Frank Grainger had a good time in his youth. His great delight was in hunting; indeed, he took an exaggerated interest in the horse and its surroundings, for he only esteemed his fellow-creatures as they were better or worse qualified for grooms and rough-riders. This of course was in very early youth; when he was well into his teens he learned that there were very worthy persons extant who

could not sit a kicker, let alone a buckjumper, for half a minute, and his sympathies expanded. He was small and light, but very strong and active—a human watchspring; a good-looking little fellow with piercing grey eyes—such sparklers! curly hair, a pleasant laughing mouth; good-humoured, good-natured, and a general favourite. At seventeen he met his first severe check in life, for he had set his heart on the one disallowed profession, and his father remained firm.

So he went at medicine; not that he had any taste for the healing art—very much the contrary—but because as an army surgeon he could yet belong to the service, and lead that regimental life which he coveted. But when he had walked his hospitals, and passed his examinations, he fell desperately in love with Miss Lucy Trew, the rector's fifth daughter. They had been great allies when little things, and might probably have been content to remain friends and nothing more to the end of the chapter, if they had not been totally separated at the critical age for two years, and then met unexpectedly. It was as imprudent an affair, as the most romantic could wish for. The rector came of a fashionable family, and his wife had been an opera, ball, and flower-show belle in her time, and still retained her taste for a bit of gaiety. The girls went out a good deal, thought much of dress, and often stayed with Belgravian friends during the season, so that Lucy had not been trained at all for a poor man's wife; neither would she bring him a penny-piece wherewith to mitigate the poverty.

Of course both families were loud in their outcry against a marriage contracted under such circumstances; if metal upon metal is bad heraldry, no metal on no metal is worse matrimony; ah, if those two negatives would but make an affirmative, how many young people would sing for joy! But they don't, and Frank Grainger's only hope was in what he could earn.

To Miss Lucy, indeed, the matter seemed most simple. "Why, you goose," said she, meaning gander, "you have only to take a big house in London and put a brass plate on your door, and people will come in their carriages and give you guineas wrapped up in bits of silver paper all the morning." But Frank Grainger knew, and she soon learned better, and they had a good deal of anxiety, which was rather pleasant at first; for to have an object in life seems to brush up people's faculties and senses. Of course the young surgeon gave up all idea of the army, and looked about for more suitable employment. First of all he was engaged as assistant in a country town, and then, being by no means devoid of energy, he started on his own account at Conway, in the centre of a hunting country, where he established himself in a most original manner.

Somewhere about a week after his arrival he was called in to attend the servant of a neighbouring squire, and as he left the house he saw its proprietor, together with a posse of friends and stablemen, surrounding a lame horse and speculating upon its ailment. He joined the group and gave his opinion, which differed from that of the others, and eventually proved to be right, as by following his advice the animal, a valuable one, was saved. The delighted squire asked the new doctor, who understood a horse so well, to dinner, where he met a large party of congenial spirits.

Could he ride? Rather. Did he hunt? Not now, he could not afford it. "I will give you a mount." "So will I." "So will I." Frank was nothing loth; he accepted all the offers which were pressed upon him, and won the hearts of the hunt to such an extent, that he was asked to ride the champion of that district in a steeple-chase. He did so, and happened to win.

From that day he was known all over the country-side as "The Doctor," and no one, rich or poor, ever called him by any other name. Nor was he without practice, for the impression upon the minds of many of the hearty farmers was that good riding proved the possession of a high order of talent, which would show itself in all other matters. Nor did the Doctor discredit this good opinion. Between ourselves his medical knowledge was limited, but he had plenty of common sense, and what he did know he could apply.

Then he was very confident, very attentive, very humane, and his manners were charming. The mere sight of his kind, merry face did good to man, woman, or child, while his only medical fault, his youth, was in a great measure counterbalanced by his seat on horseback.

The worst of it was that the population was thin, and most fearfully healthy; and though living was cheap, on the other hand it was necessary to keep a pony, the patients lay so far apart. Still he made some sort of a living, and could not accept mounts in the hunting season nearly so often as they were offered him.

When he had been established at Conway fourteen months, he sent an intimation of the exact state of his affairs to Mr. Trew, and shortly afterwards, amidst much head-shaking, the young people plunged.

Eh, well! poor Lucy found that her friends had shaken their heads with good reason. She had thought herself prepared for any amount of privation, but in sober truth her notion of poverty was doing without a carriage and wearing out her dresses and bonnets. Of trouble in paying the butcher and baker, of restriction in the number of table-cloths and things sent to the wash, she had no idea. Everything needful for existence and bare comfort she practically looked upon as coming

as a matter of course, like worms to the blackbirds. As for the Doctor, if he could not get what he wanted he did without, and thought it rather a joke, but he hated being in debt, and it made him wretched to see Lucy so uncomfortable. So that their home was not quite the Paradise they had anticipated, there were so many forbidden trees, and they could not help nibbling at some of them, and duns came. They were saved from running hopelessly into debt by a couple of children coming in rapid succession to increase expenses.

This sentence sounds like a paradox, but it was a fact. Nothing except maternity would have made Lucy anything of a housewife, but the responsibility of managing for her babies seemed to take the meanness out of economy, and she learned how to make ends nearly meet. So that at the expiration of ten years they only owed a hundred pounds.

CHAPTER THE SECOND

THE PRIZE PATIENT

THE struggling doctor had one slice of luck: a permanent invalid came to live in a gable-ended house in the very village of Gonway. A curious place it might seem for a sick man to choose as a residence, but Harry Jarvis was drawn to it by associations.

He came of a county family which had held a fine estate in the neighbourhood for many generations, and that estate had passed from his father to his elder brother Ernest but little incumbered.

There were but those two children, Ernest and Harry, then mother they hardly remembered, they lost her so young, their father died when they were twenty-two and twenty respectively. Ernest was a big fellow from the first, a mean spendthrift.

That sounds contradictory, but it is not so, indeed the character is by no means uncommon. Where his own pleasure was concerned he was insanely extravagant, but no miser ever clenched his hand with more niggardly tightness when he was asked to give a trifle towards any object in which he was not directly interested. Five pounds a dozen for wine to be drunk at his own table was right enough, but twopence for a pint of beer for a poor man was encouraging drunkenness. In a very few years he ran through all his property, and his estate was brought to the hammer, but not a sovereign from first to last was invested in a charitable purpose.

He was even positively dishonourable in his wretched greediness, for he took advantage of an informality in his father's will to escape paying over to his brother certain personal property which had been intended for him. Harry's kind and easy disposition was aroused by this, and he instituted a law-suit, which he lost. About the

equity of his claim there could be no manner of question, but it could not be made out legally. It was a cruel blow to the lad: that his own brother, who inherited so much, should grudge him his pittance, affected him a great deal more than the loss of the money, and resolving never to have any communication with him again, he realised what little property could not be taken from him, and sought his fortunes in Australia. After thirty years of steady success as a breeder of sheep and bullocks, he got a windfall. A town in the neighbourhood of which he owned some land suddenly waxed great, and threw out a suburb over his claim, which became very valuable.

But this piece of fortune was not of much good to him, for just as he was thinking of retiring from the somewhat hard life of a squatter, and settling down in a more lively home to enjoy the fruits of his industry, he had a fall from his horse which hurt his spine, and inflicted other injuries likely to bring him to an early grave. As he lay for weeks, helpless and in pain, home-sickness, from which he had been pretty free all these years, attacked him strongly, and directly he could travel he came to England, and settled at Gonway, with the desire of ending his days in the neighbourhood of the spot where he had begun them. He would have liked to purchase back the family estate, but that could not be managed, and he consoled himself with the reflection that after all it would be hardly worth while, it would remain with him but a very short time, and after his death would go away to strangers again. For he knew of no blood relative besides his brother, and to reinstate *him* was the last idea likely to enter his head.

The young Doctor called upon this new neighbour the day after his arrival, and found him more frank and outspoken than men who have not had the advantages of a colonial training are wont to be, for in reply to certain expressions of regret at seeing him in so crippled a condition he said—

"Well, I suppose that you would not take much interest in me if I were hale and hearty, would you? Why, if it were not for poor unfortunate fellows like me, you doctors would starve."

"All's one for that," replied the Doctor, "I am just as sorry to see a good fellow laid upon the shelf as anybody else could be. And then, from loving horses and hunting, an accident like yours comes home to my sympathies more directly than any other would."

"Oh, I see that you are one of the right sort. Doctor," said Mr Harry Jarvis with a smile, "and I hope that you will attend me professionally. I had intended to have sent for Mr James, from Winton, hearing that you were very young at it. But I don't suppose that matters really, and if it does, no physician or surgeon in the world could do me a hap'orth of good, I expect. You are

youngish, though, to be in a place without a mate or a rival."

"Perhaps I am, you see there is hardly room here for two, and the last man died just in the nick while I was looking about for a practice. I fancy that the people find me just as efficient as he was, though he may have been cleverer, for I am always available, and he was very often on the drink, poor fellow. As for no doctor being able to do you good, I would not think that if I were you; I do not say that you can be cured, but your life may be made easier. One thing you may be perfectly certain about—if there is anything in your case which baffles me, I will tell you so, and bring a man in who will do you good if any one in the world can."

A most unprofessional conversation, outraging etiquette, I dare say, but these two men felt intimate and at ease with each other before they had been in the room together for five minutes, and they talked accordingly. I wonder if there is any

practical philosopher who can reduce our sympathies to a satisfactory rule? The wise gentlemen are very ingenious, according to some of them all our kind actions are traceable to selfishness, and when we are virtuous by chance, it is only because experience has taught mankind that virtue pays. Surely those who have found out all this could also explain why it is that we coalesce with some people directly we see them, and live under the same roof with others for years without being able to get on terms of mutual understanding.

Lord Houghton has expressed what I mean in a song called "Strangers yet," to my mind one of the most pathetic poems extant. I believe it has been set to music, and if so I hope never to hear it. If badly done it would be murder, if well it would depress one for a week. A husband and wife live together all their lives, and are "strangers yet." How common that is, and how hopeless!

END OF CHAPTER THE SECOND

HESTER MORLEY'S PROMISE.

BY HESBA STRETTON,

AUTHOR OF 'THE DOCTOR'S DILEMMA' ETC ETC.

CHAPTER THE SIXTH

CARL'S VISITS

MISS WALDRON took care that Carl should have no opportunity of seeing Hester again until some of the excitement of his new position had worn off, and until she had established a stronger influence. It was astonishing how great an effect her clever platitudes had upon him. She possessed the art of investing commonplace observations with a seeming profundity which might easily have imposed upon an older man than Carl, while at the same time she surrounded him with those thousand minute delicate attentions which lie only in the power of a woman. Once or twice she drove with him to John Morley's house, and waited in the carriage at the door while he made a pastoral call; by which means she insured an extreme brevity of visit, and had the satisfaction of learning that Hester had not made her appearance.

How long she could have maintained this careful line of conduct is uncertain, if Grant had not been impatient to introduce Carl more familiarly to John Morley, and he took the first chance that presented itself. Carl naturally chose to see a good deal of his future brother-in-law; and though Grant was made welcome at Aston Court by all, even by Miss Waldron, who was fully awake to this weak point in her tactics, yet she could not forbid the young minister visiting him in his own rooms. A favour-

able opportunity occurred before long when Grant invited him, without formality, to call upon John Morley.

"I want you, if possible, to infuse a little hope into his nature," said Grant, "and then if I could induce him to shut up shop an hour earlier and take some healthy exercise, instead of going to the prayer meeting, we should make him a tenfold better Christian than he is. Don't you agree with me?"

"To be sure I do," answered Carl.

"Miss Waldron wouldn't," said Grant, laughing, "but it stands to sense that when a poor fellow's liver is as bad as a liver can be, he cannot be so good a Christian as he ought to be. I'll make you see that as plain as print, Carl, if you will only attend."

"Hadn't we better see Mr. Morley first?" suggested Carl.

"Well, I'm ready," he answered. "I don't need a hat just to cross the street—There! a customer has gone in—a rare bird opposite—but if you like we will go and see Hester first. I am quite at home over yonder."

He proved the truth of his last words by entering the house without knocking at the door. The lobby had a damp earthy smell, at which he uttered a significant "Faugh!" He passed on without ceremony up the staircase to Hester's little sitting-room, the door of which was half open. It was the

same homely, austere, bare room where Robert had passed his weary hours of convalescence. To Carl's student eyes it was full of charms: the glitter of gilded bindings upon the bookshelves; the pile of snowy work upon the table where Hester had been sewing with an open volume before her. A small thimble lay upon the page, so curious and rare a toy to Carl, that he could not forbear to take it up and try it upon his own fingers, one after the other, until it fitted the least. He wished that Miss Waldron would sometimes employ herself with

end of the long passage, to the door which connected the workroom with the dwelling, and there shouted to Lawson, in his loud, sonorous voice, to ask if she was up in the attic. Hester's own clear tone had answered, inviting him to come up to her. He went back to fetch Carl.

"She says we are to go up to her," he announced.

"Who says?" asked Carl absently.

"Who says!" echoed Grant; "good gracious, Carl, what a dreamy fellow you are! Why,



"CARL SHADED HIS EYES WITH HIS HAND."

sewing. The open book was one of his special favourites, and several others on the shelves were well worth his own reading. He put his hat down on the table near to Hester's work, and regarded the whole with a singularly pleased smile upon his lips. There were no more than two chairs in the room, Hester's and another. He took the other, and looked across to her seat beside the white work and the open book and the thimble lying upon the page. Miss Waldron's kind admonitions were all lost upon him.

He had been in the room, Hester's sanctuary, alone, for Grant had left him there while he went to seek for her. Grant was not actually away more than a minute, for he had gone only to the

Hester says so—Hester Morley. I wonder at you. Come along with me."

Carl followed him, almost with a guilty conscience, a sense of treachery and disobedience to Miss Waldron. Yet was it not decidedly his duty to become acquainted with Hester? He would set so strict a guard over himself, that he would not fall into the danger, his kind sisterly friend apprehended. He knew indistinctly that they were passing through some remarkably dingy rooms, and up a narrow staircase; and then they came to a flood of sunshine, and a glorified attic, with a young, lovely, graceful girl standing in the midst of the sunbeams, glowing and blushing with surprise, and looking into his face with shy, almost

timid, grey eyes. It was time for Carl to shake off his absence of mind. It was perfectly necessary that he should conduct himself as a pastor. After uttering a few words, what he knew not, he looked around the curious apartment, and saw an undersized and withered-looking man standing behind Hester. When he met Carl's eyes he bowed profoundly, and with an ease that confounded the young scholar, who had made no study of any mode of salutation. It was a full minute before he could venture to glance at Hester again, but when he did so she had turned back to the binding press in the window, where Grant was looking carefully at her work. Carl drew a step or two nearer to them.

"Mr. Bramwell," she said, "this is my own work. I have learned to gild the books after Lawson has bound them. This is Lawson, my father's book-binder, and my oldest friend."

Carl shook hands cordially with Lawson.

"Mr. Grant ought not to have brought you up here the very first time," continued Hester, a little reassured. "I did not know you were with him, or I should have come down-stairs to you."

"I am very glad you did not know," said Carl, with difficulty.

"I am not sure that I am altogether sorry," answered Hester, feeling a girlish sympathy with his evident embarrassment, and talking the more fluently because of it. "You know I have seen you several times already, though I have not spoken to you, and I do not feel as if you were quite a stranger. Besides, Mr. Grant has talked to me a great deal about you and your sister. I know all about her; and I do hope she will like me very much when she comes to live at Little Aston."

Carl felt as if he should renounce his sister if she did not make Hester her chief friend—after Miss Waldron, perhaps.

"I think," said Hester, with a charming little toss of her head, "it is quite as well you should know at once that I belong to the working classes. Yes, I work up here five or six hours a day, for poor Lawson's hand is not always steady enough for it. I am not at all an idle, elegant young lady, Mr. Grant will tell you that. He sits by the press sometimes for a whole hour watching me."

What would not Carl give for such a privilege? He caught himself wondering if he should ever do the same, and reproved himself sharply for it.

"Hester looks upon me as an old married man," said Grant, with a laugh; "and I believe I am the only one she ever sees, except her father and Lawson."

A flush crept slowly over Hester's face until it deepened into a crimson hue of shame, so plain and so painful that both of them turned away on pretence of looking at the specimens of binding upon the walls.

"She is as shy as a lapwing," whispered Grant in Carl's ear: "I ought not to have said it."

"We will go down-stairs now," said Hester, after a moment's pause; and she took off her large apron, and smoothed down the sleeves which had been rolled up above her round and dimpled elbows. "My father will be very glad to see you, Mr. Bramwell. During the last three or four years Mr. Watson could not come often to see us, and my father receives no other visitors, except Mr. Grant."

Carl followed her down-stairs, wondering at his own silence and the difficulty he felt in speaking to her. Relief came to him in John Morley's presence, for the melancholy and reserved man brightened at the appearance of the friends. The fire and beauty of their early manhood, its freshness and buoyancy, had still a nameless charm for him in the midst of his disease and gloom. He listened to their keen lively conversation, and allowed himself to be drawn into its current. Carl was conscious of talking well and aptly, and of interesting his host; and he stayed so long that Grant was compelled to leave him. He scarcely knew how he had the courage and resolution to say farewell at last; but he awoke from a confused trance as his foot struck against the massive door-sill of the entrance-hall at Aston Court, and he felt that the next minute he should be in the presence of Miss Waldron.

Should he tell her where he had been, or keep it a secret from her? He felt guilty enough to know that he had gone very near the folly against which she had so emphatically warned him. Yet he was a free man, in bondage to no one. But did not any friendship, and especially a friendship so close and discriminating as Miss Waldron's, in some measure militate against freedom in its completeness? Did he not owe a return of frankness and confidence to one who was so entirely, so sweetly open to him? Yet, on the other hand, what had he to tell? He could not confess that he had put his hat down on the table close to Hester's work and tried her thimble on each of his own fingers. His veins tingled at the recollection. No; there was nothing to say about his visit, and it would only give rise to misapprehension in Miss Waldron's mind if he mentioned it.

With this reflection, amounting almost to a resolution, he went on into the drawing-room, where the servant told him, volunteering the information with a covert smile, that he would find Miss Waldron. She greeted his arrival with the blandest of welcomes, and invited him to a seat upon an ottoman placed near to her own lounging-chair, in front of a window. She was herself in the shade of the curtains, which shed a becoming hue over her somewhat faded face.

"You have been absent for some time," she said softly; "it is more than an hour since I went to

the library to look for the seventh volume of Kitto, and you were then gone away. Have you been making some visits among our people?"

"I went to see Grant," answered Carl, with an air of hesitation.

"To be sure," she continued; "I suppose he is now very busy with his preparations. Is there nothing I can do to help them on? You know for your sister I should be delighted to do anything in my power; only I suppose we shall lose you when she comes to Little Aston."

Miss Waldron heaved a sigh, which spoke inexpressible things, and remained silently musing, with a sad eye fixed upon the future, for some moments. She then resumed her conversation rather abruptly.

"Then you only went to see Mr. Grant?" she said.

"No, not exactly," stammered Carl; "at least, I went only with the intention of seeing him, but he asked me to go across with him to Mr. Morley's."

"Indeed!" said Miss Waldron, with a significant coldness in her tone; and then she betook herself to silence, which extracted more information from Carl than the most persevering cross-examination would have done.

"We went across," he said, in hurried accents, "and as Mr. Morley was engaged, Grant took me up-stairs into the workshop, where the binding is done. Hester was there, but we stayed only a few minutes, and then we came down to see Mr. Morley. He is, as Grant says, a singular study, and it is possible that I may do him good."

"And get harm to yourself," she replied forebodingly.

"No, I think not," he said; "but if it were so, should I do well to set my own welfare before his? Ought I never to run any risk to myself for the sake of the souls of my people? We applaud those who go into a plague-house at the peril of their own lives; and should not I, in my ministry to others, sometimes lose sight of my own soul?"

He spoke with ardour and agitation, while Miss Waldron fixed upon him a dull gaze of wonder and disapprobation.

"I do not agree with you," she said; "no charge can be so important as that of our own soul. But I will pray for you that you may not be overtaken in a snare. Would it not be a help to you if we met once another at the throne of grace at some stated time?"

Carl was perplexed, and looked questioningly into Miss Waldron's face.

"I scarcely understand," he said.

"I mean, shall we appoint a season when we may both pray in our own closets, with the knowledge that the other is similarly engaged at the same moment? It is a great help to those who try it."

Carl shaded his eyes with his hand, and steadily

studied the pattern of the carpet before he replied. A man of his age and temperament is often more bashful, not to say modest, than a woman of Miss Waldron's years and disposition. He did not raise his eyes, and he looked very much put out of countenance.

"I think not," he murmured; "there is such a solemn secrecy in prayer between God and our souls. I feel as if we ought to be alone before him. Some may find it a help, but I think it would distract me."

A silence of several minutes followed which was becoming almost terrible to him, when at last Miss Waldron broke it in tones of profound emotion.

"Still I will pray for you," she said, "and watch for your soul. I proposed it for your sake only, that you might feel that you were not contending with the tempter alone; you are not alone—you never will be while I remain your friend."

She rose sobbing, and retired, it may be supposed to her closet, leaving Carl in an uncomfortable state of doubt as to whether he had not behaved like a brute.

CHAPTER THE SEVENTH.

AT THE HALL.

THE marriage of Grant with Carl's sister was celebrated as soon as they could enter into possession of their pleasant house on the road to Aston Court. It was within a few hundred yards of the park gates, and in the direct route between the Court and the town. As soon as Grant returned from the necessarily brief tour of a young country surgeon, Carl quitted Aston Court, and took up his permanent abode in their new home.

Miss Waldron had manifested a very charming interest in everything relating to Carl's sister, and had added several ornaments and luxuries to her dwelling, even before having seen her. Nothing could surpass the emphasis of her patronage and kindness to the young wife upon her entrance into her new sphere. Oddly enough, there was a superficial resemblance between Annie Grant and Rose Morley, which struck painfully upon Mr. Waldron, though it escaped the observation of his daughter. She possessed the same slight and girlish figure, and the same fair hair and blue eyes; yet the similarity of circumstances and position, in the first pride and happiness of marriage, may have formed the chief resemblance between them. The same impression was produced by her on the mind of Hester. She had not been witness to the gay, and innocent importance of a young wife since she had seen it in her step-mother. The old memories rushed back like a flood upon her, and the old sadness, which had been lighter of late, once more returned to her face.

It is probable that John Morley himself was oppressed by this likeness; for even his friendship

for Grant and Carl was not strong enough to induce him to traverse the square of Little Aston, and approach the gates of Aston Court, in order to pay a wedding visit to the young doctor and his bride.

Annie Grant went to see him, but her gay looks, her cheerful voice, and the bright colours of her dress, all jarred upon his morbid nature. After her visit he had an access of melancholy, which reacted upon Hester. They felt that they dwelt apart in a charmed circle, which they could not pass and which no other could enter. Yet there was one other, encircled by the same heavy chain, who could no more escape from it than could they. Robert Waldron stood aloof from all the small festivities of the honeymoon; and his obvious melancholy strengthened the link between him and Hester. These others, so glad and happy and hopeful, what had they in common with her? Their eyes were too dazzled with light to see clearly into the darkness where she and her father dwelt. She loved them with a love which excluded envy, but fate placed her altogether apart from them all.

She did not go so often as she might have done to Grant's house, or so often as Carl had, unconsciously to himself, hoped she would visit there. He did not associate with her in the pleasant familiarity he had looked for. To be sure his actions were now free from the hourly scrutiny of Miss Waldron; but her kindly surveillance was not at an end. The distance between the houses was not great, and there was no part of the town to traverse. She could come up in the most negligent and becoming morning costume, or even with a shawl thrown over her evening toilette, to spend only a few minutes with dear Mrs. Grant, at the most unexpected of hours. Her studies were growing more profound than ever, and Carl's Hebrew and Greek were in perpetual request. She soon knew the place of every book upon his shelves better than he did, and often employed herself with setting them in order for him. He felt that he ought to be grateful, and he strove to be so. It was impossible for him not to be pleased and flattered.

Robert Waldron did not miss seeing his advantage, and making the most of it. Hester went the oftener to visit Madame Lawson, because she could take no pleasure in going to Grant's house; and he did not fail to meet her there as often as he judged it prudent. It had become an unnecessary thing to make any excuse for seeing her thus, as Hester had fallen into a habit of taking it tacitly for granted. In a place so small as Little Aston it required some tact to prevent their meetings becoming known; but he was a master of ingenuity. Besides, the entrance to the court was not commanded by any window, except those of the house where old Mr. Watson had used to live. The few

inmates of the court were working folks, who had enough to do to mind their own business; and the woman of the house he gained over by judicious presents. There was positively no danger, either to Hester or him, of their secret being betrayed. He considered himself advancing, with sure and steady progress, towards his end.

Hester's new melancholy was rather a soft and tender sadness than the old hard, gloomy monotony of the continual weight of dejection. There is a moment in the early dawn when the growing light seems to tremble and draw back a little, as if it would fain linger longer in the dark mantle of the night. Such a moment had come to Hester. Her eyes had caught a light brightening on the horizon, and her heart had felt a glow of warmth reaching it; and for a moment or two longer she wished to keep her eyes closed, and take back the familiar chill to her heart. She knew herself no more. Caprices, foreign to her hitherto, had gained the mastery over her. Sometimes a passion of tears shook her; at others a vehement desire to exhaust herself by action, when the binding press in the attic seemed like a refuge to her. The shrewd old Frenchwoman fancied she could read the girl's heart like an open book; and a hundred cunning little wrinkles netted themselves about her eyes and lips. She assured milord Robert that before long it would be quite safe to tell Hester of his love.

It had been the hope, both of Mr. Waldron and Robert, that Grant's marriage might open the way naturally for once more inviting Hester to visit at Aston Court. The small festivities attending it might include her. When, therefore, Miss Waldron announced her opinion that it would be but a graceful courtesy to invite Grant, his bride, and Carl to dinner, with something of ceremony and state about it, Mr. Waldron gently insinuated that Hester also might be induced to join them, or rather that John Morley might listen to the invitation. Miss Waldron would probably have scouted the idea with indignation, had not Robert warmly seconded his father. She knew exactly how far she could venture in opposition to her brother; and it was very plain that he had so set his heart upon this as to make contradiction dangerous.

In consequence, Mr. Waldron was permitted to introduce the subject to John Morley, which he did in an informal manner at the close of a Sunday evening service, judging it best to take him utterly by surprise. Mr. Waldron had shaken hands with Hester, and looked into her face with one of his half-fatherly glances of affection, when he turned to John Morley with an air as if he had but just thought of the matter.

"By-the-by, Mr. Morley"—he had dropped the epithet "brother" some time ago—"Grant and our young minister, with Mrs. Grant, dine with us to-morrow. I think you ought to let my little friend

Hester come with them. She wants some young society. Give me your promise that she shall come to-morrow."

He waited with ill-concealed anxiety for the answer, and John Morley looked keenly but silently at him—longing to inquire whether Robert was at Aston Court, for he knew nothing of his movements, yet unable to bring his lips to pronounce his name.

"Should you like to go, Hester?" he asked.

Hester's heart had bounded with mingled surprise and pleasure at Mr. Waldron's invitation. For the last week or two, time had been very monotonous and irksome to her, and she felt a girl's natural desire for some change. Besides, there was no shock to her in the idea of meeting Robert Waldron, whom she had seen so often of late.

"I should like it very much," she answered, "if you would not be grieved, father."

"No, no," he said hurriedly.—"She shall come, Mr. Waldron, she shall come."

John Morley drew his daughter's hand through his arm, as they passed through the chapel porch, and looked down upon her questioningly, by the light of the lamp hanging over the entrance.

"Hester," he said, with a new tone of tenderness in his voice, "Hester, they invite you now to their parties. Is it that you are grown up into a woman?"

"I suppose so, father," she answered, half gaily and half sadly.

"How old are you then, child?" he asked.

"I am nearly twenty," she replied.

"Twenty!" echoed John Morley. "And I have taken no count of the years! Your mother was no older than you when I married her; and she has been dead these nineteen years. Have you any thought of being married, Hester?"

The question was put in simple seriousness, but in the tone rather of a friend than of a father, who might expect to have a voice in the matter. Hester's hand trembled a little upon his arm, but he did not perceive it.

"How should I, father?" she said.

"Ah, how should you?" he repeated. "You see no one, and know no one. Yet, my child, I should like to know that you were happily married. When I think of it I feel that I have done you a great wrong. But you shall go this once to Aston Court. Have you any pretty dress you can wear, child?"

It was so extraordinary a thing for John Morley to concern himself in so frivolous a subject as dress—his own or any one else's—that Hester could scarcely believe she had heard him aright. Her wardrobe was scanty, for money was scarce, and becoming more so every month; but she assured him, with an evasion very like a deviation from strict truth, that she should do very well.

"Hester," he said, when they had reached a dark part of the street, and she could not see his face,

though she could detect a sharp anguish in his voice, "do you know if his son is at home?"

"Yes," she answered softly, and pressing his arm to her side.

"You will see him, and speak to him," he resumed. "I cannot. God forgive me in this, if I sin in it. I believe it would kill me to meet either of them, and I am not fit to die yet. But they say he is contrite and repentant. I give you my consent to see him."

The confession that she had already seen him often trembled upon Hester's lips, but the recollection of his prolonged agony of despair sealed them. If she had had anything definite to tell him about Rose, she would have had the courage to do it; but to say only that she was lost would be simply to awaken the sharpness of his grief again. She resolved to pursue her course of concealment, and hide everything from him that could add to his sorrow. It was a perilous path for a young girl to choose.

Robert heard that Hester was positively coming to Aston Court, with a delight which he could scarcely disguise. Ever since he had come to the conclusion that she, and she alone, could satisfy his fastidious notions of what his wife must be, he had longed to avail himself of the advantages his position and surroundings gave to him. Hitherto she had seen him only in Madame Lawson's garret; and he wished her to see him in his own sphere—the master of a position which must dazzle her young mind. He contrasted with self-gratulation the sumptuous elegance and costly taste which he had introduced into his father's mansion, with the bareness and poverty of her own home. All the next morning he sauntered about the handsome rooms, and the terraces, where still lingered much of beauty, even in the later days of autumn. He pleased himself with picturing Hester at his side, expressing more by looks than words her shy pleasure in this loveliness and luxury. By a curious perversity of reasoning, he had begun to regard a marriage with her as a fitting compensation for the wrong he had been guilty of towards her family. He felt sure that he could make his father acknowledge the strength of his arguments; but how could he convince John Morley? He must first secure Hester's love.

The evening came, and the hour when Hester should arrive. Miss Waldron had sent a carriage to Grant's house, for Carl was suffering from a cold, which made it necessary to load him with most gentle attentions. She had, however, let Hester slip out of her mind; and as Annie Grant and Carl had no knowledge of her accepted invitation, they had, of course, come without her. Robert felt a wrathful pang of disappointment; though he was not altogether sorry that Carl and Hester had not been riding in the same carriage. Mr. Waldron himself

was keenly disappointed. The night was dark and foggy, and Hester had no one to escort her through the lonely park. Miss Waldron said she was sorry, with a lurking smile of satisfaction, and busied herself to see that Carl had the warmest seat by the fire. Robert made no complaint, but went out quietly to order the carriage back to Little Aston, and at the moment that he passed through the hall, the large doors were thrown open by a servant, and Hester herself appeared upon the threshold.

She stood still for an instant, with a glance, half-frightened, into the great hall, which was brilliantly lit up. Her lips were slightly parted, and her breath came flutteringly with the speed at which she had been walking, and her large grey eyes were still deep and dark with the gloom through which she had come. The night, with its thick fog, looked black behind her, while the coloured pavement of the hall, and the stained glass of the lamp over her head, made the foreground rich in tone. The strong contrast of light and shadow, with Hester standing on the line which separated them, looking lonely, embarrassed, and timid, formed a perfect picture to Robert's eyes. He hurried forward to welcome her, and the servant drew back respectfully.

"Is it possible you have come all alone?" he asked.

"I had no one to come with me," she replied. "I went to Mrs. Grant's, but she was gone. I was obliged to come on alone or return home."

"Did you wish to come so much?" he said, lowering his voice. "Are you, then, glad to come here again, Hetty?"

Her answer was not ready, and her eyes drooped till he could see the nervous quivering of the long eyelashes.

"I think I am," she said at last, "I am not sure. In some things it seems scarcely right to be here, but still I am a little glad."

The gladness was so qualified, and the qualification so conscientiously expressed, that Robert did not know what to reply.

"Go and take off your shawl," he said, touching it lightly with his hand, "I will wait here for you to take you into the drawing-room."

He watched her intently, as she followed his sister's maid up the broad low steps of the staircase, with a subdued and quiet grace which was perfectly in tune with his matured taste. He paced up and down the hall, chafing at every moment she was away. There were twenty minutes yet till the hour for dinner, and he would keep her all to himself for that short period. Impatient as he was, he did not see her descend the staircase and did not know she was close beside him, so noiseless was her approach, until she spoke in tremulous accents, and then he started violently. There was a scarcely mastered excitement in herself which lent a colour

to her cheek, and when she placed her hand upon his offered arm, he felt that it was trembling.

"We will not go into the drawing-room just yet," he said, "I have a painting or two to show you."

He led her into a room which had been built especially for his own use, since his return to Aston Court. It was lofty and spacious, and wainscoted throughout by carved panels of some light wood which had a pleasant lustre upon its surface. There were a few good pictures, and here and there a handsome cabinet or bookcase. At one end was an organ which he had ordered to be made for this particular place, that the volume of sound should suit the space exactly, for he had become almost a master of music. A piano stood beside the organ. There was nothing of beauty or luxury lacking which his heart could desire, and over all a soft light was shed by shaded lamps. He led Hester to the hearth, and placed her in a low chair before the fire. There he stood, with his arm resting on the mantelpiece, looking down upon her drooping head and shy, almost awkward attitude of embarrassment. How poorly she was dressed, in her grey stuff gown, with her sole ornament a little silver brooch, fastening the collar round her graceful throat. There was not a maid servant in the Court who could not have put on a smarter dress to go out on a visit. It would form an odd contrast with his sister's toilette, and the unfaded finery of the young wife. But he liked it well. The very poverty and simplicity of Hester's appearance was charming to him. Perhaps she guessed partly what he was thinking about as his downward gaze scrutinised her, for she glanced up to him with a smile of singular archness and sweetness.

"I am not very fit for such a grand place," she said.

Not fit for such a grand place! Robert's heart bounded, and the blood tingled through his veins. What did Hester mean, went as she often was to betray her thoughts with innocent frankness? Had she been thinking of herself as—as? Robert could not finish the sentence in his own mind. What should he say to her? It would be some thing excessively commonplace. How much dare he say to her?

The opportunity of saying anything was snatched from him, for, while he hesitated, the door opened and Mr. Waldron made his appearance. He did not see Hester until she rose from her low chair, and then he arrested himself with an exclamation of astonishment.

"Why, Robert! Why, Hester!" he ejaculated.

Robert was never at a loss as to what to say to his father, and now he found himself able to speak fluently.

"I found Miss Morley just come in," he said, "and as she was both cold and agitated, by her lonely walk through the park, I brought her in here for a

few minutes before taking her into the drawing-room."

"Oh!" was all that Mr. Waldron could at first reply. He knew that his son must have seen Hester at the time that he was lying ill in John Morley's house, but he had no idea that he could have founded any intimacy upon that ill-omened introduction. He recovered, however, from his profound amazement enough to give Hester a most cordial welcome; and then he conducted her himself to join the rest of the party.

It was a more than usually pleasant evening both to Miss Waldron and Robert. She kept possession

of Carl, and paid him every possible attention; while Robert scarcely quitted Hester's side. This devotion did not escape his sister's observation, but it served her purpose well; and she could not descry any danger therein. It kept Carl away from Hester, and threw him solely upon her blandishments. Robert's delight in Hester increased hour after hour; and when the evening was ended, and she had gone away, this time in the carriage which also contained Carl, he resolved to ask his father's counsel and consent to his marriage with John Morley's daughter before many more days had passed.

END OF CHAPTER THE SEVENTH

TEA AND SHRIMPS.



UNDOUBTEDLY one of the charms of London riverside life is tea and shrimps at ninepence a head. The luxury is a social and inexpensive one. You have a holiday; the weather is fine, and you rush off to Greenwich, to ramble in the park, to admire the view from One Tree Hill, to regret the disappearance of the ancient mariners, who lent such a fascination to the grand edifice which has taken the place of that earlier one where our eighth Henry was born, and where he used at all times to hold his royal court.

You take a peep at the hall which records, on many a square yard of canvas, the victories of the mariners of England who guard their native seas, and then, hungry and a thirst, how pleasant is it to indulge in the refreshing articles provided for the public by the female inhabitants of Greenwich! How pleasant is the air, how enjoyable is the scene, and as the "lovely Thais sits beside thee," and you indulge in the good cigar—which, however, you must bring with you, good cigars don't grow on every hedge—you feel that for once in your life you have little left you to desire.

Alas, alas! it is only in the green and salad days of youth one cares much about tea and shrimps. As one gets older one appreciates the luxury less; the shrimps don't seem so fresh; the arbour is positively shabby; the tea is very watery; and as for the lovely Thais, what a provoking chignon she wears! Then if you are one of a party, how stale are all the jokes, and how flat is all the laughter! And then you, yourself, have possibly not changed for the better. It is not always that the wisdom of age is to be preferred to the lightness and gaiety of youth.

But I am digressing. Shrimps, and not men and women, are my theme. In these days of free-trade and steam navigation, the reader will not be surprised to learn that many of the shrimps that find their way into the London market come from Holland. But you and I, my dear sir, are true-born Englishmen, and are quite ready to believe the Thames fisherman when he tells us that the English shrimp is much to be preferred to its foreign rival.

All down the river, from Gravesend to the Nore, are shrimps caught, but the head-quarters of the trade is Leigh, a pleasantly situated little fishing town three miles this side of Southend, that favourite holiday resort of Londoners, to which they are carried rapidly and economically by the rail from Fenchurch Street, or by the boats of the Steam Packet Company.

When the tide is up, it is a delightful walk along the shore from Southend to Leigh. There is little in the Isle of Wight that is prettier. On the hill on your right a little ahead is the ivied tower of the old church of Leigh, which is well worth visiting on account of the many brasses it contains. Behind are the cliff and shrubbery in which the Upper Ten of Southend greatly rejoice. Far off, on the other side of the water, rise the high foreground of Sheppey Island, the forts of Sheerness, and the masts of the block-ships which guard the Medway, and then, as you walk along, what fleets of merchantmen and steamers plough their way between London and the distant harbours of every country under heaven!

As you approach Leigh, however, you find yourself gradually shut out from the Thames by the Isle of Canvey, and in the creek which runs between you and it is the harbour of Leigh, a harbour dotted with fishing-boats, and into which they can run at all states of the tide. You may see about a hundred and fifty boats at rest.

Leigh itself, like a great many other places, looks best at a distance. On the top of the hill there

are a few good houses and some capital building sites, but the town itself, through which the railway runs on a level with the high street, is wretchedly dark and dull. It lies down in a hollow, with the houses all packed together like a barrel of Yarmouth bleaters; and on a summer evening after school hours, when all the small fry of the village are about, circulation is almost impossible.

I find that the people pay for their cottages quite as much as they are worth. Seven pounds ten shillings a year is quite enough for four rooms and a bit of garden; but the people don't complain, and firmly believe that in all England there is not a healthier locality. As a rule, I may add, these people are a very creditable set. It is seldom they come to grief except for smuggling. They are exceedingly regular, too, as church-goers, and never go fishing on a Sunday. Another fact to be noted in connection with the place is the hereditary character of its trade. Children are brought up to their fathers' trade—sons, fathers, grandfathers, all go shrimping, as did their ancestors before them.

The manner of the trade is generally as follows—Two men take a boat between them. If they hire it the proceeds are divided between the captain, the mate, and the owner. Their voyage generally lasts from tide to tide. The size of their boats is from four to five tons. They are furnished with a boiler, in which to boil the shrimps, and four nets with which to catch them. These nets are generally sunk in about ten fathoms of water. Sometimes the boats lie off Leigh. Sometimes they stretch away as far as Whitstable. The men incur little danger. As the waves are seldom mountains high this side of the Nore, their principal risk is that of being run down by ships in the dark.

The only thing of which the men do complain is the tax on gums imposed by Mr Robert Lowe. In winter time they were often in the habit of going shooting on Canvey Island, and thus earning a few shillings extra. They cannot do this now, and hence the Chancellor of the Exchequer is as unpopular there as in Bethnal Green. I don't fancy the trade is peculiarly lucrative. Surely if fine, healthy, muscular men do not earn on an average more than twelve shillings a week, much cannot be said for their vocation, even if they do get the fish, which is the staple of their diet, for nothing. The station-master at Leigh tells me he has often known the men to get only a penny a gallon for their shrimps after the railway carriage has been paid, but then there are times, when shrimps are scarce, that they get considerably more. At all times the men seem well fed, are neatly dressed, and have a manly bearing. Surely the living they earn is better than they represent it to be.

"I suppose you get a very good living," said I

to a shrimper, who looked, in his white trousers and blue guernsey, a fine specimen of his class; but he shook his head sadly, much after the fashion of the ruined farmer, or shipowner, or wealthy tradesman rapidly accumulating a fortune—but that is a trick all men have. In England no man seems to like to show that he is doing well. In youth we say with good Dr. Watts—

"Not more than others I desire,
Yet God has given me more."

But that feeling leaves us as we get older and come into contact with millionaires. I believe even the employés of the Circumlocution Department, who come to their offices at eleven and leave at four and have two hours for lunch, and only a couple of months' holiday in which to recruit their exhausted frames, think themselves grievously overworked and unrighteously underpaid.

Shrimps, according to the men here, are of two kinds—red and brown, the former being either the young, or a variety of the prawn. I have heard people say it is the boiling that makes all the difference. I am sorry for their ignorance. Brown shrimps are much to be preferred to red—they are crisper and sweeter to eat. They affect good living themselves—they are to be found where the cockles and the muscles grow.

It is a curious fact that where you find the brown shrimps you are sure not to find the red. The latter live on rorse, as the Leigh fishermen call it. As to what rorse is I could get no clear idea. According to all accounts it seemed to be a spongy sand. Further than that I could get no solution of the mystery. It was in vain I pressed my anxious inquiries. "I am no schollar," was the amiable reply. I found, though, backward as my friend was in his learning, he was an adept at drinking beer. He was also a man who could look ahead.

The Leigh fishermen are a prudent class, and are all connected with local benefit societies, with quaint names and of ancient origin—and no wonder societies connected with shrimpers are ancient. In ages long ago Pliny wrote of shrimps, how they darkened like a cloud the sea-side of a calm evening, and on a sandy shore. "Suppose then," he observes, "suppose then, what I have no doubt of, each individual of the number to be in a state of positive enjoyment, what a sum collectively of gratification and pleasure have we before our view!" If the genial philosopher had lived in our times, how his heart would have been cheered at the view, not alone of the shrimps, but of those who eat them!

"What a sum collectively of gratification and pleasure," he would exclaim, "have we before our view, at the sight of a swarm of London excursionists regaling themselves on tea and shrimps!"

J. EWING RITCHIE.

A JUNE DREAM.



"TO BE FED FROM THAT HAND."

ALL sweetest sweets hive
In her name ; at its thought
All beauty's alive,
And swarms to me, unsought.

In the hot City here,
In the fierce glare of noon,
With its murmur appear
All the far sights of June.

Its music I let
Ripple soft o'er my lips :
Stony streets I forget ;
Far from town, fancy slips—

Off to fresh woodland air,
Ferry dells, listening glades,
Forest roofs where fawns glare,
Does but checker soft shades.

In green gloom, let me watch
Through this thick hazel screen,
Down the still path to catch
Sight of her—I, unseen.

See how golden beams peer
Through the branches above—
Peep, to fondle the dear
Form and face I so love—

Watch for her, from whose way
Startles not one wild thing,
Round whom hares love to play,
Squirrels chatter, doves wing.

See—she comes, lily light ;
How the moss-patched boles press
From the wood-depths to sight,
For her brown eyes' caress !

How each pale wood-star prays
Up to her from the grove,
That her eyes' love and praise
Each, may bless, as they pass !

See—she comes ! Oh, my heart
Speed my dear dream to meet ;
From my loving eyes start
Looks to haste on her feet !

Oh, fairness, so filled
With all pities and loves,
Well all fears may be stilled
In your pet waiting doves.

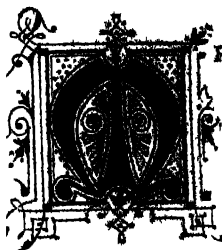
Well on each listening bough,
Gentle-eyed, may they stand,
Longing always, as now,
To be fed from that hand.

W. C. BENNETT.

POETICAL JUSTICE.

IN FIVE CHAPTERS—CHAPTER THE THIRD.

THE DOCTOR'S PROGRESS.



R. HARRY JARVIS and the young Doctor fell in friendship with one another at first sight, and a good thing that was for both of them. The story of the former was well known in the county, for the uprooting of an old family from the soil is not

soon forgotten in rural districts, and many who had known him in his boyhood came to visit him. But such acquaintanceships were necessarily formal ; he could neither entertain guests nor go out himself, and people could not be expected to drive four, ten, fifteen miles into Gonway to chat or play cribbage with an invalid. So that the Doctor and his charming little wife were his great resource ; few days passed without one or the other spending some little time with him.

Nor was this attention on the part of the Grains merely politic, though no doubt the cheques received by the Doctor were larger than would have been drawn for ordinary medical attendance ; nor was it the result of mere pity. They had a real pleasure in the society of the crippled man, who was a most excellent and genial companion, full of amusing and interesting anecdote illustrative of colonial life. And then, which is a great thing,

he was never peevish, and did not take their attentions as a matter of course ; when they came in he was obviously pleased, and that always appeals strongly to our affections. "Gratified vanity," say the philosophers : I don't know, not being an analytical moralist, thank goodness.

After remaining in much the same state for seven years, Mr. Harry Jarvis got rapidly worse, and the Doctor, after warning him that his end was probably approaching, took advantage of the intimacy between them to speak upon a delicate subject which often made him uneasy, and asked him whether, under the circumstances, he would not like to be reconciled to his brother.

"If you mean that I should forgive him," replied the sick man, "I have done so long ago ; but if you think that I ought to make him my heir you are mistaken. I allow him a hundred a year, paid monthly, and have made arrangements for the same to be paid him after my death. That is enough to feed and lodge him, and every penny he has over and above the provision of absolute necessities he spends in vice."

"I dare say you think him worse than he is ; no man is altogether good or altogether bad. He may have atoned for his early conduct by years of remorse."

"I hope so," said Harry Jarvis, shaking his head.

"Come," urged the Doctor, "you are prejudiced—very naturally so, I own, but still prejudiced. I think that he ought to be your heir, but you may know best, so I will not urge that. I should like you though to send for him, and tell him you have forgiven him."

"No, no, I will never send for him. I vowed I would not."

They had several conversations upon this matter, and the Doctor saw very plainly that his friend and patient would really like to shake his only relative once more by the hand before he died, were it not for breaking his resolution. So, as the Doctor himself did not believe Ernest Jarvis, or indeed any other maligned individual, to be half as bad as he was painted, he found out his address, and wrote to him privately, telling him of his brother's precarious state, and intimating that he thought peace might be restored between them if he came to Gonway and asked for an interview.

Ernest answered this letter in person, and professed extreme gratitude. His estrangement from his dearly-beloved brother made him miserable, he said, it was true that he had been foolish and imprudent in his youth, but his enemies had represented his conduct in too black a light to Harry, to whom he certainly must have seemed to have behaved very badly. But he could have explained everything, so far as his intentions went, if he had been given a chance. But no, Harry refused to see him, and left the country in anger. Ah! if he could only be reconciled to his poor brother before he died, it would give him a feeling of peace and contentment to which he had been for many years a stranger. He did not care about the money, let Harry leave that as he liked, it was his love he wanted.

The Doctor was delighted to find his prognostications about the probably repentant state of the wicked brother's mind confirmed in this manner, and he brought the two together. The result was most satisfactory, all was forgiven and forgotten, the past was effaced, Ernest Jarvis nursed his brother with the tenderness of a woman, Harry Jarvis made another will in his favour and both overwhelmed the Doctor with gratitude.

Whether it was the fraternal nursing or the Doctor's skill I don't know, but the sick man tided over that attack, and regained his normal condition. And then his brother left Gonway.

CHAPTER THE FOURTH THE WILL.

IT was a short respite. Six months later the Doctor came into his dining-room one evening, and sat down gravely by the fire, without noticing the child who ran at him, or the cat that rubbed against his leg.

"It is all over," he said, looking across at his wife.

"Poor fellow!"

They sat silent for about a minute, and then Mrs. Grainger wiped her eyes, and asked—

"Was he easy at the last?"

"Very, and sensible up to about a quarter of an hour before. Indeed, he made me read his will to him; he has been very kind to us—he has left us five thousand pounds."

"No!"

"Yes, he has, I read it myself. He told me to take his will from a certain drawer in that bureau which stands in his bed-room, and when I had gone through it he watched me put it back in the same place. There are a few other bequests, and the bulk goes to his brother."

"His brother; ah, what a different sort of man he is! I suppose you acted for the best in bringing them together, Frank, but I hate the look of him."

"No matter for that; thank God, I resisted the temptation to let matters take their course. I should have been miserable now if I had not done my best to reconcile them, and yet it was a bit of a struggle, I may own that as it is all over."

"Temptation! Struggle! What are you talking about, Frank?"

"I am talking about the only matter I have ever kept secret from you, my dear, except of course medical confidences. You might have had a house in town and an opera-box in the season, and I might have hunted three times a week, if I had chosen. Poor Jarvis made me his heir first of all."

"Oh!"

"How you flush up, Lucy! I was right not to tell you, I can see. It was hard to give it up, but right is right. I asked myself, 'Suppose I had a rich brother who was a confirmed invalid, and his medical attendant took advantage of his condition to induce him to make a will in his own favour, burdened with the sole duty of paying me a hundred a year, what should I think of the transaction?'"

"And that was why you took such pains to bring the brothers together?"

"Yes, I was determined to clear my conscience anyhow. But you must not look at what I refused, but at what we have got. If anything should happen to me, you and the children will have a roof over your heads, and bread to eat, at any rate. And this comes from one who was no relative—an ordinary patient, mind."

"Oh, you were right, Frank, quite right. I do not regret it one bit. Only I wish this Ernest Jarvis was nicer. He will make as bad a use of this money—as he did of his patrimony, I fear. Have you sent for him?"

"Yes, I wrote yesterday when the change came, and again just now, in case he had not started."

"Oh, he hurried off to look after his interests at the first hint, you may depend."

"I am sorry that he did not arrive in time to see the last of his brother."

"He will not grieve much for that, I imagine; he has earned the reward of his pretended repentance and brotherly affection; what more can he desire? No one can possibly like acting the hypocrite for longer than he can help."

"You are dreadfully uncharitable, Lucy."

"Not generally, I think; but you are so easily imposed upon, Frank."

Mrs. Grainger was right, at any rate in assuming that Ernest Jarvis would hasten to Gonway at the first intimation of his brother's danger, for on going to the house on the following morning the Doctor found him there. He was not a pleasant-looking man at the best of times; he had a shifty eye, and could not look you straight in the face while talking to you, for one thing; his lips were thin and his forehead was narrow, and dissipation had traced ugly hieroglyphics on his features; so that, in fact, a lady might easily have taken a prejudice against him, if prejudice it is to condemn a man by his face, which I rather doubt.

That peculiarity of avoiding the eye of any one he was speaking to, as though he were afraid his secret thoughts would be read, was very conspicuous that morning. The Doctor concluded that his brother's death had set him thinking about early days, and that he was suffering from remorse and shame for the past; so, to comfort and reassure him, he began to tell him what kind and affectionate messages the dying man had sent him. But the other paid little heed to his words; there was

evidently some other matter that he wished to speak about, and presently it came out.

"It is a curious thing," he said; "my brother spoke to me, the last time I saw him, about a will. Indeed, he showed it me. It was in my favour; so, as I am heir-at-law, it is not of much consequence; but still there were several little bequests, last wishes, and so forth, which one would like to comply with, and I am very sorry that he destroyed it."

"Oh, but he has not done that," replied the Doctor.

"Ah! he has sent it to his lawyer then; I am so glad."

"No; it is in his bureau."

"Very odd; I cannot find it."

"I can easily show you where it is," said the Doctor, leading the way up-stairs.

The scene was enough to make any one moralise. There, in the still, darkened room, lay the corpse of a poor fellow who had been unable to take anything with him, not even his body; and his brother and best friend came in, not to weep, or brood regretfully over the past, or take a last fond look, but intent only upon finding a piece of paper which would settle how his money was to be disposed of. And the Doctor, look you, at least was no selfish, greedy man, but kind-hearted and generous, far above the average—really attached, too, to poor Harry Jarvis, and grieved for the loss of him. But still, at that moment, the king who has no rebel among his subjects, the god whose worshippers are all steadfast in their faith, great Mammon, swayed his soul, and he went straight up to the bureau, without even glancing towards that waxen face and rigid outline.

END OF CHAPTER THE FOURTH.

LIFE IN ST. THOMAS'S HOSPITAL.

BY A PATIENT.

IN TWO PARTS.—PART THE FIRST.



WHAT would an ancient inhabitant of Rome, or Athens, think of the building facing the Houses of Parliament, could he resuscitate himself and stand to gaze and ponder on the *coup d'œil* that presents itself? The Roman, in his day, might see his Coliseum; or the Athenian might watch with an engrossed eye his Acropolis, crowned with the Parthenon, but he would see no such palatial structure devoted to the wants of the sick as St. Thomas's.

The inhabitant of the banks of the Tiber deemed

human life to be glorious so far as it was associated with military prestige and valour, and that if a man added to the renown of his country by offering his life in battle, death and posthumous fame were his greatest points of ambition; but they did not value human life sufficiently to devote public funds, and genial charity, to soothe and relieve the sick man in his troublous career to the grave. Once the splendour of his youth was past, once the flush of his manhood had disappeared, and all extraneous care for him was gone; he was not tended with gentleness and affection as in modern days. Everything was done that was possible to inure him to scenes of bloodshed and daring; but when

feebleness and old age arrived succour was wanting. The same with the Athenian as with the Roman. There was everything in Athens that human ingenuity could devise to flatter the vanity, please the imagination, and foster the passions; but they had no hospitals—none of those magnificent piles which we see raised up in many parts of London, devoted exclusively to the care and nurture of the sick.

There is something especially great and fine about St. Thomas's. It stands in a good position, is twin sister to the Houses of Parliament, and forms a noble adjunct to Westminster Bridge. It constitutes part of the now famous London Embankment, its base being washed by the glorious Thames. It is magnificent as a piece of architecture, being built in seven distinct blocks or pavilions. Each of these blocks would of itself form a splendid structure, and they are embraced or joined by running corridors, extending the whole length of the building.

The ground that it stands upon is immense, and the whole mass of building, of brick and stone, of tower and pinnacle, of arch and column and pilaster, forms a scene eminently attractive to the eye. There is no sameness of surface. The colours of brick and stone are variably interspersed, and the building rears itself from the basement with a proud grandeur and beauty that strikes us all.

The interior is consonant with the exterior. The wards are extensive, splendidly lighted, and the boardings are of polished oak. Between each block or pavilion is a quadrangle, with its centre laid out in garden plots, and tastefully bordered with ivy-leaf. Then there are corridors, some partly roofed in, others of stonework, facing the river, with their round columns, and smooth, beautifully clean pavement. Then there are offices, the residences of the officials of the establishment; and there is a long and broad esplanade, with its fine gravelled sub-structure.

There is the operating theatre, with its round loop-holed apertures, standing in the rear of the building. Then there is the lecturing theatre, where lectures are delivered on the science and practice of medicine and surgery, in a detached portion of the grounds; and there is, contiguous to this, the dissecting room, with its subterranean passage leading from the main portion of the building. There is beyond and above all a fine, clear, open space, with plenty of fresh air and a splendid view of that particular part of London.

Many objections were raised, soon after the building of St. Thomas's, as to the non-advisability of constructing large and elaborate premises for the congregation of the sick. It was alleged that where many diseases were crowded together there would be the chance of a fresh generation of disease. That such things as typhus, typhoid fever, and

erysipelas would be more likely to receive fresh augmentation of their terrors from being crowded together, than in a smaller hospital where there were fewer fever cases to treat. Instances were adduced in which in such buildings as the Great Northern Hospital, King's Cross, there was a less rate of mortality than in such places as Guy's and Bartholomew's.

There can be no question that in a large overcrowded hospital, if an epidemic of small-pox, fever, or cholera broke out, the chances of infection and contagion would be infinitely greater than in their smaller counterparts; but it must be essentially erroneous to aver that a larger building necessarily causes the generation of disease. Erysipelas, undoubtedly, is a most rapidly fatal distemper, and its progress may be vastly accelerated by crowded wards and want of ventilation; but it is not more rampant and active in a large hospital than in a small one.

A large hospital will, by its very size, attract the attention and consideration of the public, and, in proportion as it does this, means for retarding and destroying the destructive effects of disease will be forthcoming. So that should infectious diseases have a wider and freer play in large than in small hospitals, the means of combating them will be greater. There will be better appliances both surgically and medically, ventilation will receive its newest aspects, the processes by which pain is softened will be brought more quickly into play, and there will be a greater competition of talent. Medical men of the most renowned skill, and surgeons of the most advanced class, will almost instinctively be drawn into the ranks of the larger home for the treatment of disease. There will be more suggestions emanating from the public, and more efforts of science brought to the front, by which all that is inimical to human life will be ameliorated, and all that can add comfort to the disordered sick will be brought under the notice of those most interested in the case.

It may be said that the study of medicine is more effectively promoted in small than in large schools; that difficult cases in a ward can only be carefully watched where there are few of each class. If a student in a surgical ward sees several instances before him of fracture, compound fracture, comminuted, simple, etc., and he sees large numbers of such accidents constantly swelling the ranks of beds, his attention will be more liable to be distracted than if he saw one or two occasionally. So with medicine, he may see numbers of patients suffering from phthisis, pneumonia, pleurisy, paralysis, the various kinds of oedema and anasarca, and his professional capabilities may be confused by the very numbers that are thronging about him. So with the anatomical school, there may be a large number of subjects on the table, and in pro-

portion as the number is great, he may be likely to pay less close attention to the demonstrations, and may get more wearied with the doctrines. But the result of observation does not exactly prove this; the most eminent, the most scientific men in medicine have very often been educated in the large schools, and there can be no question that the larger schools usually have the best men as lecturers. This is said in no invidious spirit, but it cannot be denied.

How different the style of the modern to that of the ancient hospital! We do not speak of the time when amputations were performed without the aid of chloroform; when such operations as the removal at the hip, and the excision of large masses of malignant growth, were performed without the aid of æther and the various kinds of anæsthetics; when the actual cautery was used with nothing to assuage the violence of its application. We speak rather of the hygiene and general conducting of a hospital, where everything has undergone an almost thorough radical change; where the rough and uncouth nurse of the past has become obliterated; where the superintendence of a ward has been entrusted to ladies whose education in nursing has undergone an elaborate and careful tending; where the kind, the gentle, the compassionate sister is ready with her words of consolation and kindly actions to soothe the voice and cry of sorrow; where the well-ventilated ward takes the place of the overcrowded and stifling atmosphere which the patient of old was wont to inhale; where the general management of the building is given to men skilled in business habits, and whose aim will be that those who are under their care receive all the immunities and comforts which are within the province of the institution.

Let us glance at the mode of life within. We enter by the main entrance, up a flight of stone steps, and see some out-patients scattered about (taking the time as between nine and twelve in the morning).

One individual has come probably to have his tooth extracted, and sits with a dolorous countenance, most impatiently awaiting the dreaded ordeal. Another has come to have his finger dressed, from the effects of some injury he has received in a crush or a fall. Another is there with a lugubrious countenance, his face covered with adhesive plaister, about to undergo a fresh covering of his face and broken head; he has been the victim of a street fight in a drunken *mêlée*; his face exhibits various prismatic hues, and the puffed cheeks show the meaning of a traumatic inflammation. Another man is hobbling along on crutches; he has been an in-patient, and has suffered amputation below the knee, and has come to say that his wound is getting on all right. Another has a swelling formed in his neck, and has become

dreadfully alarmed; he wishes to know whether it can be got rid of or not—he perhaps will not be very agreeably edified when he is informed that it is a tumour, requiring extirpation without loss of time.

We leave them with their sorrows, and pass into the main corridor. This is a long wide passage, with handsome tessellated flooring, and looks important enough for a street, so busy and so populous does it appear.

There is a confused yet subdued noise going on, indicative of hurry and excitement. There are students moving about, nurses, patients, sisters, and probably the matron and steward. Along this corridor are branches leading up-stairs, and entrances to the different offices. There is a hydraulic lift in one place, which communicates with the flights above, and which is a most convenient adjunct to hospitals; by this means the patients are wheeled into the lift and removed up above, without the jolting necessarily experienced when moved by hand or chair.

We are ourselves conveyed by it into the accident ward up-stairs, in one of the first blocks of building. Everything appears large, well lighted, and very clean. The place seems redolent of the best paint, the best colouring for the walls, and the best of everything used in building. The ward holds twenty-eight beds, and has an auxiliary room for two patients attached. The windows extend from floor to ceiling, and the opposite end of the ward communicates with a balcony overlooking the river. On this balcony the patient is brought, bed and all, in summer, so that he may solace himself with the cool breezes that issue from the river. The beds are large and most convenient, some of them having spring mattresses. There is a large space allotted to each person from bed to bed (we forget the total in cubic feet, but know that it is a large number). The floor is of polished oak, thus doing away with the necessity of having it scrubbed so often. There is, of course, a good amount of damp atmosphere at certain seasons from its close contiguity to the river, and should the floors require constant washing the exhalations might become too frequent, and some diseases might be augmented in intensity. This is obviated by polishing with bees'-wax and resin. On the other hand, some surgeons might maintain that a disorder like erysipelas would be more likely to be kept at a distance by having the boards constantly washed, erysipelas harbouring itself often in places where soap and water on the flooring is not in perpetual use; but still it hardly sounds reasonable that even erysipelas, virulent and poisonous as it is, would hang about an oaken board covered with fresh-smelling bees'-wax and turpentine.

Suspended right above the bed-head is a pulley, by which the patient can raise himself in bed,

and can feast his eyes on the glorious architecture to be seen across the water.

There goes Big Ben—it is striking the quarters—it is a quarter to eleven. One of the visiting surgeons is going round; he has, perhaps, ten cases in the ward. Here is an old man who has broken his femur, and is lying on a bed looking like a succession of inclined planes. Here is a boy with a diseased bone and with curvature of the spine; he is lying on a water-bed. There is a railway guard who has lost his foot in a collision on the London, Chatham, and Dover Railway. There is a railway porter who has had his leg broken on the South-Western Railway. Here is a German who has been run over when drunk, having strayed on to the line of railway somewhere near the Wandsworth Road Station. There is a lad who has undergone amputation of the leg and one or two fingers, his bright feverish countenance betraying a scrofulous diathesis of constitution. The surgeon has his crowd of disciples with him, some of them dressers, and most of them students attending lectures on surgery. He is listened to with very great attention, for his word is law, and the instructions he gives are chiefly addressed to the gentlemen who are specially appointed to dress the wounds after amputation or accident.

Some particular case requires more than ordinary inspection this morning, and the house-surgeon informs the surgeon what it is. It is a man who has had secondary hemorrhage after an operation. The man is sinking. Everything has been applied—ice outwardly, brandy within—still he is becoming more exhausted, and the surgeon, with a grave countenance, informs the poor fellow in bed, in a few concise sentences, that his case is a very bad one; but yet he contrives to instil a little hope into him, and leaves him not altogether bereft of consolation.

Here is another victim of scrofulous disease. It is a little boy, seven years old, who is in a very bad state, but still bears his misfortune with great equanimity.

Some of the patients betray much excitement under suffering; others display an almost stoical fortitude. This last may be owing often to a want of nervous power and organisation, while the other may be the result of a too finely adjusted nervous system.

We do not hear much of suffering at this particular moment. Early morning, and late at night, when the wounds are being dressed, are the times when the patient gives most vent to his feelings.

END OF PART THE FIRST.

THE MILL-STREAM.



SIT beside thee, mill-stream,
The wheel goes whirling round;
The bairnies play among the hay,
Their yellow ringlets float away
On light blue air that seems to say,
"Be merry, skip, and bound,
And dance beside the mill-stream;
There's music in its sound."

I sit beside thee, mill-stream,
A-knitting stockings brown,
So spick-and-span, for my old man
(He's in the mill among the bran);
And show a leg and foot he can,
For one that's growing down,
As shapely, to thee, mill-stream,
As any jo in town.

I love thy bawling, mill-stream,
As dearly as thy splash,
When its foam-kiss, on days like this,
Lights up the wheel with sunny bliss;
For if I hear thy wrathful hiss
Below the tempest's crash,
I know the wheel turns, mill-stream,
The faster for the clash.

I've lived beside thee; mill-stream,
Full forty years this June;
My slip-coat cheese, and honey-bees,
My cherries, and my apple-trees,
I thank kind Providence for these,
His gifts around me strewn;
I well may think our mill-stream
Is never out of tune.

This homestead nigh thee, mill-stream,
Held once two bonny boys;
My little Joe is lying low,
But Willie has a farm to show;
Fine crops of wheat and barley mow,
And wife, and household joys;
His bairns stand yonder, mill-stream,
And listen to thy noise.

I would not leave thee, mill-stream,
Before these limbs are drest
For my last bed, that shall be spread
Close by my buried darling's head;
There, turf lies softly on the dead;
There I shall be at rest,
Nor hear thee clatter, mill-stream,
Above the old wife's breast.

JANE DIXON.

HESTER MORLEY'S PROMISE.

BY HESBA STRETTON,

AUTHOR OF "THE DOCTOR'S DILEMMA," ETC. ETC.

CHAPTER THE EIGHTH.

FATHER AND SON.

FOR several months past Mr. Waldron's first earthly wish had been, as we know, to see his son married. He was satisfied for his daughter to remain unmarried, as she adorned a single life by so much zeal and devotion; and perhaps he was reconciled to it the more readily as his family name could not be transmitted through her to posterity. But already Robert had attained an age when a man grows more difficult to please, and more discriminating as to feminine perfections. Hester ought to have been a hundredfold more flattered by his love than she could have been by the love of Carl Bramwell. Mr. Waldron's search after a daughter-in-law, whose price should be above rubies, was becoming an almost despairing pursuit; and Robert gave him no assistance. On the contrary, he appeared to be settling down into an indolent, self-indulgent bachelorhood. The day following that on which he had found Hester seated at Robert's fireside, with him leaning over her in a lover-like attitude that had struck him with amazement, the father and son walked out amicably together over the farm-lands belonging to Aston Court. Both felt that the time was come when they must speak to one another upon that which occupied their thoughts; and Robert preferred doing so as far from the presence of Miss Waldron as possible. He accompanied his father to the end of a stubble-field which was to lie fallow during the winter, and then he commenced the conversation in as composed a tone as if he were making some agricultural observations.

"I think, father," he said, "that it is time I married."

Mr. Waldron planted his stick firmly into the soil, as if he intended it to take root there, and gazed anxiously into his son's face.

"To be sure, Robert—to be sure," he cried.

"You were surprised to find Hester alone with me yesterday," he continued.

"I was," replied Mr. Waldron briefly.

"Father," he resumed, stammering a little, "it was not at all the first time I have seen her of late. We know one another very well. The fact is I happened to meet with her in the house of an old Frenchwoman."

"You don't mean the mother of John Morley's workman?" interrupted Mr. Waldron.

"Yes," said Robert, "I have met her there many times during the last few months."

"Robert," interrupted his father again, with an expression and tone the most severe he could assume towards him, "you cannot mean to tell me that you, a man of the world, knowing how ready the world is to gossip, can have taken advantage of Hester's ignorance to draw her into a clandestine intercourse with you?"

"I have," owned Robert, in some confusion.

"I wonder how you dare to confess it," continued Mr. Waldron, leaning more heavily upon his stick, as if his son's words had wounded him deeply. "She is so simple, so unsuspecting! She did not know to what censure she exposed herself. Suppose your sister had found it out!"

Mr. Waldron's face wore an aspect of real terror; but Robert smiled a little to himself.

"I took care that nobody should know," he said; "you need not be afraid for Hester. But now you will not be surprised to hear me say that I love her more than any woman I ever saw; ay, more than I ever supposed I could love. It seems to me that there can be no love in the world like that I feel for my little Hetty."

Robert's handsome face, with its new air of profound and passionate tenderness, looked handsomer than ever as he spoke; and his father, regarding him fondly, fancied that any woman would forgive him any previous folly.

"But have you forgotten the past?" he said.

"Forgotten it!" exclaimed Robert; "have you or my sister suffered me to forget it? Forget it! Why, I have only to look into Hester's face, with all its sweetness and beauty, and there I see my sin written legibly in its sad lines. How can I forget, when it is Hester herself I love, in spite of everything?"

"But what can be done?" asked Mr. Waldron despondingly.

"I want to atone to her for all these years she has lost," he answered, with vehement earnestness. "I will make her after-life so bright that she shall forget all her early sorrow. I will lift her out of the miserable confined lot that is hers, and give her a rank and wealth she could never reach without me. If she were but my wife I should have no fear for her happiness."

"But it is morally impossible," objected Mr. Waldron; "John Morley——"

"He must consent," interrupted Robert, "if I only make sure of Hester. He is very poor, almost to bankruptcy. He is ageing fast, and Hester's future must be an anxiety to him. He is already

reconciled to you, and has allowed her to visit here, knowing she must meet me. If you will only help me he will come round in time. He must—he shall.”

For a few minutes both father and son were plunged in profound thought. There was a sharp struggle going on in Mr. Waldron's mind, which was scarcely visible in his face, so long accustomed

would agree to all you said. But how did he come to know of it before me?”

“He saw me once or twice follow Hester into the court,” he answered, “and he had courage enough to speak very faithfully on the subject, I assure you. Well, he did not see why Hester should not in time become my wife. But he said



“LEANING MORE HEAVILY UPON HIS STICK.”

to hide his emotions. He was, as his old minister had told him, a proud man; and he had sometimes regarded John Morley as a person in a very inferior position.

“I talked about it with Mr. Watson before his death,” said Robert, at last breaking through the silence, “and he said he did not see any insuperable difficulties, or any insurmountable objections in the way. He did not seem to see them so clearly as I did.”

“He was a timid man,” replied his father, “and

it would be more likely to come to pass if we knew for certain that poor Rose was dead. It is my firm conviction she is dead, but I can get no proofs.”

“Robert,” said Mr. Waldron earnestly, “you are losing sight of John Morley's implacable hatred. Ah! my boy, you kept from me the history of that blow which almost killed you last February. It was then you first saw Hester and fell in love with her. I do not wonder at it. But do you imagine that, if he seeks your life, you can ever gain his consent or hers?”

"I think," answered Robert, "that his revenge spent itself in that blow. He is a good man, a religious man. He was hurried by a sudden passion into the attempt to commit that crime; but as it failed—luckily for me—he soon repented of it, and was not sorry to extend his kindness to me. We have now something to forgive one another. I am more equal with him, and that is so much in my favour. Why else was he so hospitable and kind towards me? He visited me once, and spoke as a friend would have done. He knew Hester saw me often, and yesterday he allowed her to come once more to our house. I hardly dared to hope before; but now, with you to help me, I shall win Hester as my wife."

His face, dearer to Mr. Waldron even than that of his daughter, shone with more gladness and hope than had been seen upon it for many years. His father could object no longer, but gave his hand a warm and fervent grasp.

"I will help you, my boy," he said; "yet I had my own little scheme for Hester, and it is possible it may prove in your way now. The moment I set my eyes on young Bramwell, I thought he would make a good husband for the little girl. They were both so young, so good, and so handsome. Our family owes John Morley a compensation, and I fancied I had found it in him. I would have given her a wedding dowry that would have made them almost independent of his church, wherever he goes. But now I hope he will not be in your way."

He looked anxious lest he should himself have destroyed the chances of his son's happiness. Robert also was grave, counting up all the symptoms he had detected of love between Carl and Hester. They were very few, almost none. It had not escaped his notice that his sister was making herself foolish, as he termed it, about the eloquent young preacher, ten years her junior, and he built some hopes upon it; the more so as Carl came frequently to Aston Court, and spent a good deal of time with Miss Waldron. Under other circumstances he would probably have manifested his disapprobation of such an intimacy with unmistakable plainness, but he hailed it as a sign that Carl preferred his sister's mature piety to Hester's girlish prettiness; and he was more than content to let the intimacy run a smooth course.

"I am not much afraid of him," he said; "yet I should have been quite as well pleased if you had chosen a more commonplace man for Little Aston."

"I chose him for Hester," replied Mr. Waldron in a tone which betrayed a lingering reluctance to abandon his favourite scheme; "they are just suited for each other. I thought so last night. I wish you could give up this notion, Robert."

"Never!" he exclaimed vehemently. "I tell

you I worship her. She is the only woman who can make me care for goodness or religion, or things of that sort. I have had enough to disgust me with it, but Hester makes it soothing and pleasant again. If I am ever to be anything but the idle, purposeless fellow I am, doing no good in life, it will be by winning Hester."

Mr. Waldron sighed deeply, but he did not attempt to explain his sigh. Robert's state of mind was still, as it had always been, a grief to him; but he had come to the point of no longer pressing religious expostulation upon him. His sigh, however, included something more than that. There was a misgiving in it lest Carl, whom he had brought to Little Aston for the very purpose, had not already gained possession of Hester's love. But deeper still lay an unconquerable dread that it would be impossible to overcome John Morley's instinctive repugnance to give his daughter to the man who had brought so indelible a stigma upon his name. Every one else might plead the youth and thoughtlessness of the college lad, for Robert had been little more than that; but could it be hoped for that the dishonoured husband should thus excuse him, or could ever be brought to look upon his conduct as the careless folly of a boy who had not learned to master his passions? They walked homewards in almost unbroken silence, and Mr. Waldron shut himself up in his private room to deliberate upon all the bearings of the matter.

CHAPTER THE NINTH.

AN UNHEARD-OF THING.

THE more Mr. Waldron considered the subject upon which Robert had consulted with him, the more dubious he grew as to the possibility of winning over John Morley, unless, indeed, Hester's own happiness should depend upon his consent. He endeavoured to place himself in the position of the dishonoured man; but the power of seeing with other people's eyes cannot be acquired at the age of sixty-eight. He saw his son, handsome, accomplished, and rich, with a brilliant lot to offer; and he could see Hester clearly as a very eligible daughter-in-law in every respect, except by birth. There had been always a peculiar softness in his heart towards Hester—an anticipatory tenderness, perhaps. He would like exceedingly to have her always near to him. But John Morley was, as he always had been, wrapped in an impenetrable mystery. He could no more understand him, members as they were of the same church, than Peter could understand his beloved brother Paul.

Mr. Waldron glanced but briefly towards the world, though no doubt it would have something to say to such a marriage. Ten years ago its tongue had been busy with the story of Robert's sin, and the world has a retentive memory for

scandals. It would, perhaps, be easier to pacify John Morley himself than to satisfy its scruples, sometimes more exacting and delicate than those of an individual conscience. But Mr. Waldron was not accustomed to consider the world. He had long since turned his back upon it, and treated its opinions with contempt. If he approved of the matter, and the church supported him, he could very well afford to leave all question of the world out of the transaction.

To make sure of the pastor was one means of securing the approbation of the church. He did not wish to startle or shock that small congregation of faithful men over whom he and Carl Bramwell presided. They were a simple, uncultivated class, not accustomed to split straws, but it was within the bounds of possibility that they might be scandalised by his son's marriage with Hester Morley. There is a broad though undefined code of Christian morality written most plainly upon unsophisticated hearts, which Mr. Waldron was afraid of transgressing; and upon this one weak point he yearned for the sympathy of his fellow-churchmen. It was not a formal approbation that he could receive, or they give, but simply the encouragement of unchanged looks and undiminished reverence. He resolved, first of all, to sound their young pastor.

It was late in the November afternoon, and Carl was deeply absorbed in study, with that utter oblivion of the outer life which is known only to students. Certainly there was a pleasant impression of the previous evening hovering about him like a sunny mist, and mingling subtly with every movement of his thoughts. He came up from the depths at the entrance of Mr. Waldron into his study, with something of the bewilderment of a pearl-diver who has been long under the water. It was not for a moment or two quite clear to himself who he was, or who was the intruder who came in with all the freedom and ease of a patron.

"I wish to have a confidential conversation with you," said Mr. Waldron, after a few minutes' desultory talk; "it is strictly a family matter. You are already well acquainted with the circumstances of my son's sojourn in John Morley's house."

"Certainly," answered Carl, starting with a very keen, quick-eared attention.

"You know, too, the whole history of his second wife," he continued; "I am far from casting undue blame upon her, but she was a giddy, childish young woman, with no steady principles to protect her. There had been some love-making between her and Robert at Oxford, before she had ever seen John Morley. She was fully as old as he was, therefore, as a woman, she may be considered several years older. She came here, heard nothing of Robert for a year or two, and at last married for a home. You know the rest."

"Yes," said Carl, his elbow resting upon his desk, and his hand shading his eyes.

"Tell me," resumed Mr. Waldron, "what you suppose the consequences must be to my son? He has long since repented of his sin. Is he to bear the burden of it his life through?"

"Nay," answered Carl, his lip parting with a smile of great tenderness; "you, who are an elder in the church, know the grace of God better than I can do. There is no burden of sin we may not cast away before the face of the Father."

"But are the consequences to remain?" asked Mr. Waldron. "Is he always to bear the stigma of his sin? Is he not free to act as if he had never been guilty? Ought the transgression to be forgiven by every man as well as by God?"

Carl paused. There was a swift current of sympathy and love running clear and unobstructed through his young spirit, which carried him irresistibly towards the side of mercy. He was as yet a mere student in human nature, and had had no actual wrestle with temptation. He had not seen sin face to face. At present it was a veiled and awful form for him; he had not beheld its hideous features, and received the ineffaceable memory upon his heart.

"None of the sins that he hath committed shall be mentioned unto him," he said, in a lowered and reverent voice.

"You yourself would act upon that?" pursued Mr. Waldron. "My son is the same in your eyes as though he never was guilty of this sin?"

"Perhaps not altogether that," answered Carl; "but who among us would enforce a penalty if God does not? If He will make no more mention of his transgression, why should we?"

It was Mr. Waldron's turn to pause and reflect. His anxious face grew darker, and the knotted veins in his forehead became larger. He did not feel quite sure of Robert's repentance, though he longed to believe in it. He wished to believe that his own prayers through so many years had not failed in the court of heaven. Perseverance in an earthly court must have prevailed before this. He argued illogically. Because he had so earnestly prayed that his son might truly repent, his professed repentance must be sincere.

"Mr. Bramwell," he said suddenly, "what do you think of Hester Morley?"

If Carl had been asked unexpectedly what he thought of the cherubim, he could not have been more stupefied or at a loss. He gazed blankly at Mr. Waldron, and did not reply till that gentleman repeated the question.

"Oh! I think she is very good," he answered somewhat coldly; "she is a member of the church, and an excellent daughter. My sister is very much attached to her."

"You have not seen much of her?" remarked Mr. Waldron.

"Very little," he replied.

"Should you be surprised," said Mr. Waldron, hesitating—"would it shock you in any way if you heard that my son, having seen her a good deal while he was ill this spring, was very anxious, nay, bent upon making her his wife?"

"Impossible!" ejaculated Carl, starting from his seat as if he had been shot. He took a hasty turn or two across his study, and then came back to his chair opposite his visitor. "I think I must have misunderstood you," he said, with a ghastly effort at a smile. "Did you say that Mr. Robert Waldron wishes to make the daughter of John Morley his wife?"

"Yes," replied Mr. Waldron briefly.

"It is impossible!" said Carl. "Your son's sin demands great charity from us, but he must not ask Hester to share the burden he has to bear all his life long. Oh, it would not be possible!"

"But is my son never to marry?" asked Mr. Waldron.

"Yes!" cried Carl; "let him find some one with a spirit which would not be bowed down by such a burden. But Hester is too young, too ignorant of life, too simple-hearted. He would do well with a wife like his sister, strong in her own faith, and able to fight with him against his spiritual foes. Why should Hester's young and innocent heart be joined to one which must ever bear the sting of a sore repentance?"

"You are a young man yourself," said Mr. Waldron, as Carl paused—"a very young man. There are scores, hundreds of marriages—ay, and happy ones—where there has been an early folly like this. Hester would be rich, happy, and beloved. If John Morley should be reconciled to Robert, he would become a member of our church, and would be ready to take my place in it when I am gone. Moreover, there was a something in Hester's manner last night which makes me hope that she is not averse to Robert. You may have seen it yourself—a pretty, pensive, gentle pleasure in listening to him."

"Yes," replied Carl, who had watched Hester furtively during the whole of the previous evening, and who had seen every little gesture and every expression of enjoyment that had escaped her.

"Then, if she loves him," resumed Mr. Waldron, "and if that folly of his youth should not be remembered against him now he is a man, I see no impediment to their marriage. I see in it rather a compensation for the past. If John Morley's poverty and shame have come from us, surely the honour of marrying his daughter into our family ought to balance it. Do you agree with me?"

Carl's restless hand moved absently among his papers. His face had grown pale, and his bright keen sight, dim. Until this moment he had looked at John Morley's misery from the outside.

By temperament he was profoundly sympathetic, and was touched to the quick by the feelings of others; but by this very law of his nature he had regarded John Morley and his exaggerated grief from the point of view of the Waldrons, with whom he had been most closely associated. He had placed himself in the position of Robert, and pleaded for him all the excuses he would have sought for himself. But now he seemed to look into the very heart of John Morley—that heart on fire, as Grant had once called it. That Hester Morley should love Robert Waldron! That she should ever become his wife! He pushed away the hair that had fallen over his forehead, and gazed fixedly at Mr. Waldron, who said, "Do you think with me?"

"I think," cried Carl, in an irrepressible frenzy, "that the idea is monstrous! There are some sins which cannot be forgotten. It would be a horrible thing, an unheard-of thing."

"Perhaps you love Hester yourself," Mr. Waldron suggested.

Carl hastened to regain his self-control. Mr. Waldron's face was one of sharp and anxious scrutiny; and he did not wish to subject himself to any more pointed questions.

"I was thinking of her father only," he answered; "I believe that to him it will appear more monstrous than it does to me."

"Carl," said Mr. Waldron, in an accent of pity, "I like you, ay, I honour and trust you. In bringing you here I thought it probable that you would love Hester. But this is my son's whole chance of happiness, perhaps for the life to come as well as this. It may be his salvation. You possess a better and holier happiness. Promise me at least that you will not use your influence against him."

"I have, perhaps, no right to influence her," answered Carl, sighing; "but I will commit her to His care who judges all men. If my prayers can shield her from peril, they shall not fail her."

His heart sank a little after he had given this implied promise to stand aside while she was tempted with all that ambition and love could offer her. The sole weapons he could use in her defence were the prayers and teachings she would listen to from his mouth in the public services of the chapel.

CHAPTER THE TENTH.

A NEW IDEA.

SCARCELY had Mr. Waldron closed the house-door after himself, having considerably forbidden Carl to quit his warm room, when a light rap at his study-door recalled Carl from his painful reflections upon the interview which had just ended. The second intruder was Annie, who carried a little work-basket in her hand, and came in boldly with an air which plainly announced that she intended staying with him for a time.

"Now, Carl," she said, "it is all nonsense you pretending you can study with that dreadful cold. My husband"—she uttered the word with a little bridle of the head, which showed that the title was still a new one—"has been called out, and does not expect to be home till late. He said I was to come up here and sit with you, and you were on no account to leave this room till bedtime. So I am going to order tea up here, and we will have a nice, quiet, cosy evening together, you dear old boy."

She rang for the servant to bring the tea-tray and the bright brass kettle up-stairs, and was very busy for a time in making the tea and toast by Carl's fire. He sat upon the hearth watching her, with dimmed eyes and a colourless face. Annie was quick-sighted, and the weariness of his expression did not escape her.

"Are you going to talk to me, Carl, or shall I talk to you?" she asked.

"I would a great deal rather you talked to me," he answered.

"I shall not say anything very wise, and I shall gossip," she said threateningly.

Carl leaned back in his chair, and stretched his feet out towards the fire. He could not make conversation, even to Annie, that night. His mind was very busy, but very rambling, darting from one point to another of his interview with Mr. Waldron. Yet he was not sorry that Annie had invaded his solitude, and that her voice should prattle through the confusion of his thoughts. Now and then he caught a sentence of her lively gossip, and answered by a word or two. On her part she was weaving a very skilful and subtle web by which she might entrap his most secret sentiments; but she might as well have gone directly to her point, so insensible was he to her delicate handling.

"She is very fond of me," said Annie, in a tone of great significance; and, as he was thinking at the moment of Hester, the words startled him. "She said last night she loved me like a sister."

"I am, very glad to hear it," he answered earnestly.

"I wonder how old she is," remarked Annie.

Carl knew to a day Hester's age. She was four years and three months younger than himself. He had seen the date of her birthday in a book which had been given to her years ago; but he did not give his sister the information she desired.

"She perhaps looks younger than she is," said Annie; "I think she is very good; don't you, Carl?"

"Yes," he answered, in a very subdued tone.

"And she thinks you," continued his sister, "the very best, the very first, and the most eloquent of men and ministers. Of course I agreed with her, but she said I was never to tell you so, Carl."

Carl's face grew crimson, and, with the gesture most familiar to him, he shaded his eyes with his long fine hand; there were tears, he could not tell

why, standing in them. Annie nestled to his side, and laid her head upon his shoulder.

"Dear old fellow," she said, "I daren't quite say that she is in love with you; but she is not far from it. And I am not quite sure that I should like it altogether. She is not exactly what I fancied your wife would be. I should think she cannot be less than six or seven years older than you; but she is very good and very rich, and her father is a great man among our people. Still I am not quite sure that I should like my brother Carl to become her husband."

Carl had suffered too severe a shock that evening to be staggered by this one. The deep flush faded gradually away from his face, and the tears dried under his eyelids, but he could not command his voice sufficiently to speak to Annie.

"So now," she said, kissing him affectionately, "your mind is prepared for it. I don't believe you have vanity enough for the notion to enter your head of itself, clever as you are. It would be a very grand thing for you, but I don't exactly see how it would turn out in the end. You are very fond of her, Carl."

"She is my friend," he answered, with parched lips and dry throat.

"Ah, yes," said Annie sagely; "but everybody knows what such friendships generally come to. I don't mean, Carl, that you might not go on very comfortably as a friend; but Miss Waldron will not. Mark my words, and make up your mind about it. Only if I were you, unless I really cared for her, I would not let her come here so often. I should think you could easily put a check upon that. It is not nice generally for men to marry women older than themselves, but she is everything else you like; isn't she? I wonder what Mr. Waldron and Mr. Robert will think of it!"

Carl felt glad that his sister's head was still lying on his shoulder and that she could not see his face. A profound sense of the derision with which at times life seems to flout and make a mock at us, filled his mind, and he laughed a short hoarse laugh, which grated upon his sister's ear.

"Why do you laugh, Carl?" she asked.

"I was laughing at Mr. Waldron," he answered, checking himself.

"Why," continued Annie, "would you really marry Miss Waldron if you were sure she would marry you? I was talking to Hester this morning—she came up here to fetch a book she had lent me—and I asked her if she had noticed anything peculiar in her manner last night."

"What did she answer?" asked Carl, with increasing interest.

"She was shy, as she always is, of speaking out her mind; but she said there was no doubt Miss Waldron was very fond of you."

"Fond of me!" repeated Carl; "did Hester say anything else?"

"She said what a pious woman Miss Waldron is," continued Annie; "everybody says the same. But now, my dear boy, do not be rash in any way. I am a whole year older than you, and I'm married, you know; so listen to what I have to say to you. A great many pious women are excessively disagreeable, I can tell you; they are so good that it does not seem worth while to be amiable. They may have a good deal of treasure laid up, but they have no small change for everyday use. One of your great divines said himself, that good-nature was sometimes better than grace in a wife. Now I am afraid I have not so much treasure laid up as Miss Waldron, but I am not unpleasant to live with—at least James says so. Don't be in any hurry, in any way."

Carl fell into a train of troubled thoughts again. His friendship for Miss Waldron was pure and chivalrous, founded upon the gratitude he felt for her very gracious and flattering regard for himself. No idea that she cherished a sentiment one degree warmer than his own would ever have entered his mind, had not Annie placed it so plainly before him. But now that his eyes were opened he saw it distinctly, and knew that he could never be blind again. He passed in review the incidents of the preceding evening, and then his thoughts were brought round once more to the first painful subject which had occupied them.

"Annie," he said in a very low and troubled voice, "do you think it possible for Hester ever to love Robert Waldron?"

"It looked very like it last night, Carl," she answered gravely.

"But, good heavens!" cried Carl, forgetting his disapprobation of any words at all approaching to the nature of an oath, "the thing is impossible."

"I have been thinking about it all the morning," resumed Annie, "and I partly understand how it can be. Hester has lived so apart from the world that she is still like a child in many things; and, Carl, as for sin! why, she looks at it as the angels might do. Of course we are bound to believe her corrupt and sinful, and all that sort of thing, I suppose; but I say that Hester no more knows how to distinguish between sin and sin than an angel would. It is clear that Robert Waldron does not shock her in any way, but that she is rather attracted by him than otherwise. I saw her look at him once or twice, yesterday, with the open-eyed, wondering, unconscious gaze of a child. But at other times her eyes sank and her face coloured when he was talking to her. I am afraid she might love him."

"But what could be the end of it?" asked Carl in a sharp accent.

"Ah! how could it end?" repeated Annie.

She raised her head from his shoulder, and turned her ear listening towards the window. There was a distant sound of hoof-beats coming on at a rapid rate, and a bright smile broke upon her face. She kissed Carl hastily, bidding him go to bed early that night, and left him to the undisturbed course of his meditations.

END OF CHAPTER THE TENTH.

CROAKS ON CROQUET.



THE croquet season has once more set in, and travel where we will, behind every garden hedge are heard the click of balls, the laughter and earnest adjurations of the players. The almanacs, which are wont to inform gentlemen when salmon-fishing or grouse-shooting begins, might adopt May the 1st as the proper date for the ladies' game, croquet, coming into season. Some enthusiasts, indeed, commence in April, and rumours reach civilisation occasionally in February from Devon and Cornwall, that the weather has been so mild, croquet has commenced. The next letter, however, is sure to bring the conclusion of the story: the players have been laid up ever since with influenza.

With opening summer there are few prettier sights than a croquet party; bright sunshine overhead glorifying the closely shaven lawn with its background of tender green, its glowing clumps of

azaleas and rhododendrons, while youth and happiness, the sparkling eyes, gleaming smiles, and neat ankles of the players, would tempt an anchorite from his seclusion. There is a perfect feast of colour—flowers, shrubs, and gay jardinières; bright muslins, brighter skirts, and fluttering ribbons. Even the men are arrayed in the fantastic garb which certain tailors assure us is necessary for this season's croquet. It is a scene of unalloyed domestic happiness, such as can only be enjoyed in the rural homes of England, and if only young people and match-making mammas joined in the diversion, croquet might well deserve the praise of being the least melancholy of all fashionable amusements.

Unluckily, however, it has another side, and that fraught with intolerable discomforts to those who are beyond the age of heart complaints on the one hand, and, on the other, whose daughters are not yet marriageable. Exactly, says some fair devotee of croquet, at the age of misanthropy, selfishness,

CROAKS ON CROQUET.

and indolence. Granting this, the fact remains that a very large proportion of mankind smart under these croquet-woes, and if the enthusiast denies this, in croquet as in politics the minority must surely have its rights, which renders it worth while to recapitulate its wrongs. Ten years ago any one possessed of ordinary skill and strength of wrist could knock painted balls through hoops, and while deep in conversation, even on such a subject as social science, could enjoy croquet. Now the game has become a scientific diversion. A person must go into training for it, and spend many careful hours in learning strokes, manœuvres, and the lore of "Cavendish," or Black, not merely before he can qualify as a croquet athlete, but before he can so much as venture to join in the game. Its very terminology is revolutionised, and he who passed muster a few years ago if he knew a hoop from a peg, must now be competent to enter into the mysterious jargon of roquets, dead balls, breaks, boundaries, and the like.

A plain man, who was deemed a capital player before he made a voyage to Australia, returns to the rectory garden to find himself scouted as a partner by the ladies, and stared at by the exquisites. The very spirit of the game, he finds, is altered. Two feelings only actuated the players in old days, love and ill-nature. The amiable or susceptible player helped his partner, and never croqueted a lady's ball very far; the bear laid himself out to spoil every one's little game, and to drive all the balls as far into the flower-beds as he could. At present both these violent passions are equally out of place on the croquet lawn. Either of them would seriously derange the science of the game. If a man means to make love, he must not be stupid enough to let it interfere with the rigour of the sport; if his malice breaks out in a vulgar knocking about of the balls of the other side, he is regarded as little better than a madman. Indeed, croquetting an adversary at all is now deemed a *brusquerie*.

Another grievance of the independent Briton is that he is now expected to conform in the minutest details of the game to the orders of the head of his side. This is all very well if she be young and pretty, but what if she be an exacting and uninteresting person, whose theories respecting the proper defence or attack differ diametrically from your own?

Worse still, the new conception of the game involves giving up those delicious strokes which were so gratifying to wounded vanity or self-love. It is bad enough to lose one's individuality, but the consequences of this are still more unpleasant. You can no longer pay off Jones, when you come across his ball, because he looks so supremely ridiculous in knickerbockers and that blouse-like wonder of a coat. Nor is it possible to retaliate on

Robinson at the croquet lawn, for the manner in which he snubbed your opinion on the Budget at lunch. Doubtless the morality of the game is improved by its modern development, but a good many middle-aged dwellers in the country regret the Rob-Roy-like simplicity of its prehistoric stage, when the want of an accurate eye and hand was compensated by the perfect liberty which the croquet lawn allowed for easy chat or logical disquisition, for love-making, malice, and the delights of spoiling another's deeply-laid schemes. At present, if, after the manner of the good old times, a man, on being told it is his turn to play, betrays that he has been chatting to an outsider, by innocently asking, "Where is my ball?" his character is blackened through the whole country-side. It is a great deal safer for an unattached man to vote against the squire than it is to disobey his daughter's directions on the croquet ground.

It naturally follows from a man's being thus precluded the relief of a chat with bystanders, that it is possible for him to be considerably bored by the partner to whom he is told off. In these days of ladies' colleges and popular lectures this is often a serious matter. His strong-minded partner may be scientific, and the unfortunate man has then to chime in as he best can with remarks respecting pangenesis or the doctrine of natural evolution. This may lead to discussions on the relations between revelation and science, which the victim feels instinctively are not adapted for the time and the game.

Worse still, the hapless inquirer how a lady has been spending her time lately is sometimes struck mute, owing to the spread of education, with such an answer as, "Oh, I have been studying the *umbelliferae*," and by the exigencies of modern croquet is compelled to remain trembling, lest his ignorance concerning these *fera natura* be found out, instead of beating a hasty retreat (as he would have done under the old system) to the delightful old ladies in the background and their county gossip. Doubtless this is a grievance which is not strictly attributable to croquet only, for curious scientific strata occasionally crop out at the dinner-tables of the present day. There, however, several modes of escape are open to a man. He can take refuge from the avalanche which overwhelms his neighbour under the cover of a monosyllabic hunger, or can cunningly evade its direct onslaught by talking pictures and the opera to his opposite neighbour. Croquet alone affords no respite to the sufferer.

If these are the special woes of croquet in its present development under the laws of the Croquet Club Conference and the All England Club, the Medes and Persians of the game, there are persons infatuated enough to object to the game altogether, and even profanely to term it a positive nuisance.

They assert that it is all very well for boys and girls, but is an anachronism after the wisdom-teeth have once been cut or you have been revaccinated; if it promotes society, that it is the death-blow of conversation; that when a man goes out for a mouthful of fresh air, or drives over to see a friend, he does not want to posture on a lawn amongst heat and flies, where the very claret-cup simmers in the sunshine as it is drunk.

There will be misanthropic, unreasonable individuals to the end, but however much they deserve the condemnation of all rightly-thinking people, it is hardly possible for the greatest devotee of croquet to avoid sympathising with Paterfamilias, who has just settled himself comfortably in the cool library to examine the last issue of the Early English Text Society, when his better half enters.

"Now, Brown, an odd man is wanted for Miss Sparke's side. Don't keep them waiting!"

Perhaps it is as well on such an occasion that the genius of croquet cannot hear the muttered malison which he obtains. The best advice that can be given to this class of abstainers on principle is forthwith to set up a malady. If a man is known to be afflicted with heart complaint, he may live many years, but no one could be heartless enough to ask him to stand about and exhaust his system in the sunshine; while if it is evening, or the grass is in the least degree damp, few ailments are so accommodating as rheumatism. It suffers the patient, luckily, to eat, drink, and do much as he likes, but he must on no account expose himself to the risk of a chill on the lawn. A sly rector has been known to aggravate the misery of his rural dean, who was doing penance on the croquet lawn, by telling him that, thanks to an inveterate attack of lumbago, which had withstood more boxes of pills than would have cured the late Lord Stuart de Decies twice over, he had obtained entire exemption from croquet duty all last season; and was sorry to say he still felt twinges of his old complaint, though he seemed so hale and strong.

There are other woes which result from playing croquet. Thus in the interest of that self-denying and long-suffering race, the clergy, it is worth while succouring them from the evil name given them in certain extreme papers, because they occasionally unbend at croquet. Theirs is indeed a hard lot in the matter of amusements, a pitiless age having gradually forbidden them shooting and hunting, and even frowning down cricket. Fishing and croquet alone are left them, and now they are reviled for joining in the latter amusement. A very little antiquarian lore would show objectors that croquet is eminently an ecclesiastical game. Ducange gives the meaning of croquet as a pastoral staff, and the prior's staff in the bearings of the monasteries of Newburgh, Malton, and others in Yorkshire is depicted exactly like a croquet mallet. If the clergyman

visits the croquet lawn in no other character than that of Evelyn, shocked at the gambling table of Charles the Second's court, he may obtain an addition to his stock of pulpit commonplaces, but it is questionable whether they fall upon ears so well inclined to listen as if they knew their pastor was not superior to the ordinary weaknesses of flesh and blood, and could use a harmless diversion without abusing it. Sympathy is far more efficacious with ordinary men than the sublimest heights of moral isolation. It is difficult to determine which is more objectionable, to be reviled because of joining in a game of croquet, or because of a refusal to join. Perhaps in the light of worldly wisdom, and bearing in mind the parochial councils of the future, the former is the safer alternative for most parsons to choose this year.

Were we making a general onslaught on the game, it would be easy to bring forward many more articles of attainder against it, as the strong probability of catching at least three more influenzas and colds during the season than would otherwise fall to one's lot; the wretchedness of being coupled with a miserable player when you are making admirable strokes, or of having to entertain a silent partner or (worse still) a talkative one.

We have no desire, however, to turn the tide of popularity which the game at present deservedly enjoys. Consideration is all that its victims ask for. Let persons whose hobby is croquet remember that all ages and tastes may not necessarily agree with them on the attractiveness of the game. Allow those who do not to choose their own way of spending a sunny afternoon; give them the freedom of the shrubbery rather than of the lawn. A clever hostess cannot well make a mistake if she sends the young people to croquet; with all over thirty there is need of selection and tact. If a man be a Timon, the perfection of hospitality is to suffer him to enjoy his humour. In these days of croquet tournaments and matches, it is cruel kindness for parties to ask an indifferent player to join. All alike are bored, and as from the nature of the case no exception can ever be taken to a lady, however careless or bad a player she be, it is worth notifying to all ladies' colleges and similar institutions, that a professor of croquet is as absolute a necessity to such places as a professor of music. The greatest of all nuisances at croquet (thanks be to the secrecy of initials, which alone enables us to make the ungallant avowal!) is the presence at a game of ladies who have not the faintest knowledge of or interest in the amusement.

Having now concluded a tolerably long catalogue of grievances, we commend their due consideration to all croquet players whom they may concern, and retire from the lawn, after hitting our neighbours all round, with the character of the most ill-natured partner who ever handled a mallet. M. G. W.

MEN WHO FACE DEATH.



"MAKING READY TO START."

THE LIFE-BOAT-MAN

WELL, as to life-boat-men being brave fellows, that's not for me but others to say, not but what I know they do say it. The public always give us full credit for what we do, and when any of them see us go out, they always give us a cheer and a God-speed at starting, and a "well done all" when the work is over. They'll always give us what help they can, too, in launching, and in more dangerous things if need be, as when Lord Charles Beauclerk and two

other gentlemen lost their lives trying to save some of the crew of the *Scarborough* life-boat, when she was knocked to pieces within biscuit-throw of the Promenade, about eleven years back. Knowing how well people do think of you puts heart into you when you are going out, and after all there's no two ways about it, you want all the heart you can have, in our work. And heart aren't the only thing you want either, you want strength too; you've only to see a little bit of life-boat service to find that out. If a man aren't stout and tough, as well as plucky, he won't do for a life-boat's crew. When both the wind and a heavy sea are against the boat, you have to pull your arms out almost to make way, and sometimes you can't make way after all your trying, but get beaten back—though that doesn't happen often. You get rarely knocked about too at times, washed about the boat like corks, or perhaps, washed clean out of her, so as I say it's only work for rough and tough uns.

All over with a man if he gets washed out? Oh, no; not always at least, and in fact not mostly. Our life-belts—every man has one, and ought to have it on when he goes out—are good enough to keep us well up, and to enable us to keep another man up too if necessary. For, don't you see, it's on the cards that there might be an upset with a rescued crew on board—such a thing has happened—and then we should each try to hold up our man. With your belt on, there aren't much danger of you sinking; and being afloat, your mates will generally manage to grapple you and haul you in again.

How are life-boat crews made up? Well, the Institution manages the manning of the boats, as well as finding the boats themselves, and houses, and tackle. The crews are mostly volunteers living in the neighbourhood of the station—boatmen, fishermen, coastguardsmen, and the like. There is a coxswain, who has charge of the boat-house and sees to things always being in readiness, a bowman, and as many boatmen as the boat pulls oars. The crews are registered, and where it can be done there is generally at least a double crew entered on the register, because some of the men may happen to be away when the flag is hoisted, or the gun fired; a flag being the signal by day, and a gun fired twice, in quick time, the signal at night to assemble the crews. The coxswain is paid eight pounds a year certain for taking charge of the boathouse, and every time they go afloat to save life all hands are paid ten shillings each if it is by day, and a sovereign each if it is by night; and they get four shillings each every time they go out for exercise. Of course the money comes in very handy to poor men, which life-boat's-men mostly are; but, though I say it as shouldn't, that aren't what draws hands to man the life-boats.

Taking the life-boat service through and through, those engaged in it come off with less loss than might perhaps be expected, all things considered; but for all that there is never a time that we go out that we don't risk our lives, and sometimes it looks like almost certain death to go at all, and it aren't the thought of money that weighs with a man at such times as those. It's a better thought than that—the thought of saving fellow-creatures' lives. You see the distress signal flying, or hear the signal guns in the lulls of a storm through the darkness of the night. You make out that a ship is on the sands or among the breakers, or tossing about, a helpless wreck; you hear the wind howling, and see a sea running that none but a life-boat can live in. You know, in fact, that there is nothing but you and your boat to stand between those on the doomed ship and a terrible death, and you can easily picture their agony, and how they are praying for the life-boat; and so trusting to the boat, and putting yourself in the hands of God, you go to do what men may do in the way of rescue, or die as men should if it must be so. If it is that we are not to come back, why, we die doing our duty, and we have at least the consolation of knowing that there'll be a kindly thought for our memory on that account, and that our Institution, as we call it, wouldn't see our wives and children want for a loaf of bread, till they've had time to turn themselves round and find some way of bread-winning.

He wouldn't be much of a man that would risk his life for the sake of a sovereign, or as far as that goes, for the sake of a good many sovereigns, if there was nothing beside the money in question; but he would be less of a man still that, knowing as much of the sea as we do, and being as often at its mercy as some of us are, wouldn't risk his life to go off to a wreck from which there was a chance of saving fellow-men. There is one thing about us life-boat folk, there's very few families living nigh a life-boat station that haven't lost some one near and dear to them by the sea, and as the saying is, "A fellow-feeling makes you wondrous kind." Why, I do believe our women would go into the boats if there didn't happen to be men enough to the fore to take them out. I've seen wives, and mothers, and sisters standing by while their men have been making ready to start, when it seemed like going into the jaws of death to start at all. I've seen them there with white scared faces, and clasped hands, looking more than tongue could tell, but I never heard them speak a word to keep the men—their own husbands and sons—from going. I've seen unmarried men stop married ones, and take their place, saying that it was better them be lost than men with others depending on them; but no boatman's wife would seek to keep her own man from taking part when there's lives to be saved.

Are many life-boat-men lost? Well, as I said

just now, not so many as people might think, considering the work. Some years, we'll do our work without losing a man, and, now that our boats are all self-righters, we don't lose anything like the number by upsets that we used to do. Our Institution keeps count on that head, and their returns show that in twenty years there have been thirty-two upsets of self-righters, the crews of which, all told, made up three hundred and sixty-seven men, and out of them only fifteen were lost. On the other hand, in eight upsets of life-boats that weren't self-righters, eighty-seven men were lost out of a hundred and forty. So that you see the invention of the self-righting boat gives us, as you may say, a long pull against death, compared with what we used to have. Instead of two out of every three men upset being lost, as was formerly the case, there is only at the rate of one in twenty-four.

Of course, upsets aren't our only danger. There's the chance of being washed clean out of the boat by the seas that sweep over her; and then when you get to a wreck, there is the risk of the boat being dashed against it and stove in, or of you making a slip, or getting crushed, when you are trying to board her or get the people out of her. But, after all, if more lives than are were lost in the life-boat service, they would be well lost; for, though I'm in it, I may say that ours is a good work—a work worth dying in. We save from five hundred to a thousand lives every year, and since it started, in 1824, our Institution has been the means of saving over twenty thousand lives. That would be a work to be proud of if it meant nothing more than the bare lives saved, though, of course, it does mean more—means thousands of wives saved from being made widows, and tens of thousands of poor children from being fatherless.

And, though saving life is our first object, we save a good deal of property too. We save ships, as well as men, generally twenty or thirty a year, and some of them with valuable cargoes. Life-boat crews bring many an abandoned or unmanned vessel into harbour, that would never get to port but for them, and others they help out of positions where they would be lost if it wasn't for such help; and often when we don't directly save a vessel, we are the means of her being saved, as by going out to her when she is in distress, and keeping her company, we give the crew new heart to stick to her, and work her, for then they know that if they cannot save her, we'll save them.

Well, when you are going out, it's not of your own danger you think. If you thought of that, you'd hardly be the sort of man that would go out, I fancy. So far as you think of danger at all, it is of the danger of those you are going to try to help; but the fact is, you have very little time to think about anything but the work in hand. With the

wind howling till it's like to deafen you, and the waves dashing over you till you feel as if you were going through them as much as over them, it takes you all your time to hold on and make way. It isn't enough for a life-boat's man to be able to pull a strong oar, and to have a stout heart, and a constitution to stand drenching and knocking about. Beside having all that, he must be a man that has all his wits about him in the midst of all the hubbub, and tossing and tumblings of the storm, and that, as I say, puts his thinking as well as his strength into the work in hand.

Yes, many of the wrecks that we go off to are terrible affairs to witness. People say of some hard things that they are nothing when you are used to them; but you never come to think that way of wrecks, however much you may be used to them. In fact, it's the other way about; the more you see of them, the more you know and feel what fearful things they are, and the more anxious you are to do what you can to save life from them. If you've once heard the screams and cries of a wrecked crew, or, what's worse, of the women and children from a distressed emigrant vessel, you'll never forget them, or be able to think lightly of them. In the same way the sight of a wrecked ship is one as fastens itself in your memory, and as only seems the more heart-rending the oftener you see it. A wreck is a melancholy enough sight seen after a storm, and when all is over, one way or another, with those who have manned her; but it is a harder and far more sorrowful sight as we see it in the storm, and fighting the death-fight with it, as you may say. It's an awful sight then. You can perhaps just make out her hull against the white foam-tops of the waves. You can hear the hissing and cracking of her broken cordage, which, as the howling wind blows it about, you could almost fancy was a lot of whips lashing her, as if to goad her on in the struggle. You can hear her shiver and groan when the seas break over her, till you could almost believe she had sense and feeling in her, and knew the danger she was in. Then, when you get as near alongside of her as it's safe to go, you can make out, as you top the waves, men lashed to the rigging, or a crowd of white faces with all eyes fixed on our boat. And the man that, after seeing such faces and such looks, would hesitate about risking his own life to save lives from a wreck—well, I should hope there weren't many such men, and I don't believe there is.

Well, as to risk, all life-boat service is pretty much the same, excepting, of course, that night-work is always more dangerous than day-work, for you see the darkness is a danger in itself, and, what's worse, it may chance to be the means of preventing anything being done. It sometimes happens that you hear distress signals in the night, and put off, and pull about for hours without

finding the ship; and when at daylight you do discover her, it is perhaps too late, those aboard having been lost while you were vainly looking for them.

But whether in daylight or dark, one piece of service is as likely to turn out fatal as another. Boats will sometimes lose men in trying to save the four or five hands from a fishing smack, or collier, while they may rescue every soul from a large passenger ship without any loss. Then as it's made a point of calling us out for exercise in what you may call wrecking weather—the sort of weather that we are likely to have when going on service—lives are sometimes lost at exercise. In fact, just one-half of the upsets that there have been among the self-righting boats, have taken place when they were out for exercise. It's the same way as to the quantity of work, too. Sometimes, even in the winter season, you may be for weeks together and never have occasion to launch the boat; at other times you may have to go out one day after another, while occasionally, after a night of storm, daybreak will show you three or four wrecks all within sight at once. Then you know that you are in for a long spell, and, after making a number of runs, you likely come home at last that dead-beat, that you have to be carried out of the boat; but you care nothing for that, if you've saved what lives there were to be saved.

Many wrecks through vessels being unseaworthy? I should say there was! The managers of our Institution take note of all those sort of things, and, speaking of wrecks in their journal, they say that during the last ten years there has been five hundred and twenty-four total wrecks from no other cause than the unseaworthiness of the ships, not to speak of six hundred and fifty-five casualties

from the same cause. It's a burning shame to see the floating coffins that are allowed to crawl from harbour into the Channel—every plank of them rotten, every seam of them gaping, with no sailing or steering qualities, and with a dead-weight cargo, so that they are almost bound to go down like a stone, if they get in even a moderate gale. Talking of life-boats, you may call them sort *death*-boats, for that is just what they are. Better make men walk the plank at once, than send them afloat in such craft.

Well, yes, anybody may safely say that! The life-boat service is a noble work, and the best of it is that it's a work that every one can bear a hand in, since our Institution depends on the public for support. It keeps a fleet of over two hundred and thirty boats now; but it could find work for plenty more, if it only had the means of getting them; and this I'll say, if more boats are found, those to man them will never be wanting. If the public will only keep up the boats, the sea-faring folks around the coast will always find crews ready to face death in them at the call of duty. You see it's a case of public and crew pulling together, as you may say. Whatever there is to be proud of in the work, all may share in. Any one who sees or hears of a bit of life-boat service may put himself in a position to think to himself, "Well, I helped in my way. It's true, I didn't pull an oar, but I put my hand in my pocket to keep up the life-fleet."

I often think it's a pity, though, that every man couldn't actually go off to a wreck once in his life. I should say there is hardly a man breathing that wouldn't help the life-boat cause in whatever way he could, if he had once heard the cries that we often do when going to a wreck, or the "God-bless, you's" of those whose lives we have saved.

LIFE IN ST. THOMAS'S HOSPITAL.

BY A PATIENT.

IN TWO PARTS.—PART THE SECOND.



JUST as the surgeon is leaving the ward an accident enters. A young man has had one of his arms shattered by getting it jammed between two waggon. The surgeons look at it, and almost immediately pronounce that amputation must take place. He acquiesces, and is removed to the operating theatre. In half an hour he is safely tucked in bed. The nurses have been busy in the meantime; a bed has been prepared, covered with oil-skin and macintosh, and he receives his quieting draught and goes off soon into a dulled sleep.

This particular hospital is a training one for nurses, and an admirable one it is. Everything is done that can possibly be done for the instruction of the nurses. They are not called upon to perform any hard work, their whole attention being engrossed by the care of nursing and tending the patients.

In the old days the nurse had to do all the work of the ward, such as scrubbing the floors and tables; but now she is taken in hand quite professionally, and you may see her with her "Notes on Physiology," and her "Vade Mecum" in surgery. She also aspires to a certain anatomical knowledge,

and can discourse upon the humerus, the tibia and fibula, and some will take in hand information about strangulated hernia, and talk glibly about aortic aneurisms.

Of course, it must be remembered that with the Nightingale class of nurses there are women of education and gentle birth; but even in the rank and file of nurses there are many who betray considerable knowledge of the profession. There is now, too, greater cleanliness and regard for their general personal appearance, and less of the roughness which characterised nurses of the past.

There is a good deal of tact required in the treatment of a patient as regards nursing; infinite tact, one might say; for a woman has to deal with a man, very often, with all his excitability and querulousness aroused within him, and who will take a liking or a disliking immediately; and when a man takes a distaste to a nurse he becomes very awkward in his behaviour, and may retard his recovery considerably by his conduct.

But if the demeanour of a nurse towards a patient needs great qualification and ingenuity, the power to superintend the nurses themselves requires a good deal of nice management. To rule a body of women requires plenty of diplomacy, and that person who can do it well is a clever person indeed. For this purpose sisters are provided—ladies, many of them, of considerable education, and who have been carefully trained in the art of nursing. They have gone through all the rough part of it as a preliminary course in their system of learning. Many of them are possessed of innate powers of ruling, which serve them in admirable place. Many of them have also very great capacities for housekeeping generally. It is one of the few new courses which are open to women in the great mart of the world, by which they may individually achieve an independent walk.

How far ladies, as a class, may like this sort of work, it would be dubious to speculate upon. Their natural proclivities may indicate that one all-magic and attractive word "home" as relates to man. Here, at all events, they are removed from the ascetic seclusion of conventual life, and may do a great deal towards rendering life happy, by continually having the mind engaged in active work. There is nothing so wearying and tiring as having nothing to do; and in this case a sister in a ward may find plenty, apart from the simple superintendence of nurses. She may move about among the patients; and while she is cheering the sorrowful and sick, she will, infallibly cheer herself. In proportion as nurses are themselves refined in intellect, so will they, in part, disperse their refinement amongst those around them. Or, if they cannot refine rough

metal, they may do a good deal towards removing the bad alloy that is often mixed up with it. There are plenty of fields of bad culture, where good seed has been allowed to run to waste; and a nurse may improve these by her manners, her teaching, and her general example. The tone of a ward has often been improved almost immediately by this sort of good example. Many a man has been softened, and his scale of morality materially benefited, by culture. Men who have led hard, abandoned lives, have not unfrequently been redeemed to something better, by living for a short term in an hospital.

There can be no question of one thing, however, that the application indiscriminately of nursing to women is a mistake; that many of them find out "all too quickly" that nursing does not consist of simply sitting down to console the sufferer in his more weary hours, and that there is a great deal of rough work to be accomplished. A nurse's baptism must be at the moment of her first severe operation, when she is called upon to be in attendance in the operating theatre, and make herself useful. Being the witness of a surgical operation must severely try her nerves; and many women have thrown up the occupation directly, when they have seen something of this.

Nursing is anything but attractive at its commencement; and a woman must not exhibit too much delicacy. The dressing of wounds is the crucial test for a nurse; for if she can overcome her first repugnance to this, she can overcome everything; and it requires some little time to get accustomed to it.

Nursing, as an occupation for women, and the superintendence of nurses by ladies, must, however, be better adapted for them as a pursuit than the taking up of the practice of medicine, as in the case of Doctor Mary Walker, and some few others. The study of anatomy alone must be a severe ordeal for a woman, and one almost beyond the province of many. The writer of this article has had some opportunities of seeing the adaptability of ladies for the study of the profession. Many of them have shown a want of endurance when in the presence of pain as shown by others, and have not had that hardihood generally which is required; a certain amount of impatience has been manifested, and a want of confidence; a feeling also apparent as though they were not absolute masters of the subject in hand, and could not conduct it with the nonchalant air that is always an accessory—a *sine qua non*—with one who is completely master of the subject. Nervous trepidation, and a want of everything like temerity, without using the word courage, were to be seen in many who made their debut in surgical operations. The medical profession always was associated with the male, and always will be; and, though a few ladies

may get into its ranks, there will never be sufficient of them to constitute them a body and a class.

To understand the medical profession well requires high attainment; and careful plodding, long wearying hours over the dissecting table, and long watchings by the bed-side. If our estimate of the female mind be correct, it is capable of fitful application, and a certain capricious power and aptitude—it leans more to the beautiful and the striking than it does to the every-day minutiae of the non-ideal. Whatever is exquisite and poetic its imagination might yearn after, but for the Titanic—the frequent recurrences of Sisyphus—the constant labour—the labour without apparent result—it has no inclination.

Hence we have seldom had the severely difficult languages acquired by women. The results of hard study in any occult science have never given us such counterparts as the great exponents of philosophy. We have had no epic poem from woman; no oratorio, no grand painting, no effort in architecture, no splendid writing which should strike mankind by its amazing brilliance or wonderful power. Woman says that she has never been taught how to accomplish these things like man. We answer that no great genius was ever coerced into study; the act was purely spontaneous, or almost entirely so. Most of the splendid proficients in language were men who retired of their own free-will into the closet, and there with rapt enthusiasm pored over the pages which were to them instruments of light and glory.

We are not inditing this in a detracting or captious spirit, but because we honestly believe that woman is unfitted for the domain of medicine, and most assuredly so for the science of surgery. Dispensing she might do, but she would never succeed as an operator.

Speaking of St. Thomas's as a school, we may remark that there is every possible attraction for the student. The cases in the wards and the dissecting room must be shorn of a good deal of their repulsiveness here. A student when he enters the profession has now to undergo a preliminary course of education in classics, etc. He then begins in October his system of anatomy, learning first the construction of the skeleton or bones. Then he passes on to the general structure of the body. Surgery he begins the following year; also medicine, and he commences his clinical course, or study at the bed-side. He is supposed to have four winter seasons and three summer, before he can offer himself to the qualifying bodies at the different colleges. After he commences his clinical course he is eligible for a dressership, and this is sometimes difficult and laborious work. He is supposed to be always on the spot in case of an accident coming in, and acting occasionally without the

intervention of the house surgeon, he has to be up often night and day, and of course acquires a good practical knowledge of his profession. In the case of an accident arriving, or any case requiring the attendance of a dresser, there is telegraphic communication into every ward, by means of a bell sounding, so that if the bell gives three strokes No. 3 dresser is required.

We have strayed a long way from the route since we left the visiting surgeon, and it would be, perhaps, tedious work were we to go into every ward. Each has its individual name of Albert, or William, or Arthur, or Victoria—this last being used for children.

Every case almost that can possibly be incidental to the human frame is here eligible for treatment. There are babies as patients, children, boys, men, and women. There is a lying-in charity, and there are wards for special diseases. We may here see a case of fever, scarlatina, small-pox, or typhus; and you may see the convalescent man who is ready to be sent down home, or to some convalescent home.

St. Thomas's seems almost a model hospital, so admirable is it in its general structure, and in the elaboration of its details. Everything that a charitable institution need be is here exemplified in its every branch. Should a man be too poor to go down to the sea-side, they will invariably pay his fare. The authorities never stint their patients in any way, in anything connected with surgical appliances. They are very liberal in the food rate; and one great consideration seems to be that they have their nurses specially for nursing, and not for hard work.

Surely if any institution with an eleemosynary aim is worthy of being supported it is this. It requires no splendid panegyric to praise its triumphs. They appeal to us in the work they send forth. It needs no elaborate language, no pompous paraphrase, or grand apostrophe to teach the world that it is a great and glorious institution. The work that it does accomplish is one of the finest triumphs of Christianity, and it is one in which England most eminently stands forth.

It differs from its twin palace over the water. There is great eloquence and glowing force of language often heard within its walls. The language of ambition and fervour of the human mind are items that are constantly being associated with all that is valuable in the rate of progress in the materialistic world; but there is assuredly a silent eloquence appealing to us from the precincts of such an institution as St. Thomas's, for if it do not appeal to the majesty and glory of the heart, it touches some of the most divine and secret springs of our nature, and teaches us the value of doing to another as we would that men should do to us.

POETICAL JUSTICE.

IN FIVE CHAPTERS.—CHAPTER THE FIFTH.

THE BITTER BIT.



HIS should certainly be remembered: Frank Grainger was a medical man, and death as death had no awe for him. The body of a man was so much lifeless flesh; bone, muscle; very curious to cut about and examine, but no more formidable, or terrible, than the dead branch of a tree.

Ernest Jarvis, who had had no training calculated to familiarise him with death, was nervous, pale, more hesitating in manner and gait even than usual, as though he felt the influence of what was there; yet neither did he glance towards the bed, but remained in the centre of the room, with his eyes fixed on the bureau, awaiting in suspense what would come next.

"A secret drawer, perhaps," he suggested.

"Not at all," replied the Doctor; "this is where it is," and, opening one of the compartments, he found it—empty! "This is strange, indeed," he said, looking round aghast at Jarvis. "I put it here myself, after reading it to your poor brother at his request, and I was only away from his side for about an hour from that time till the end."

"Perhaps—another drawer—easy to mistake—such a time," murmured Jarvis.

"No chance of that," said the Doctor, rapidly opening and closing all the drawers one after another. "You are sure you have not taken it out by mistake for some other paper?"

"Quite sure—oh, quite sure."

"This must be inquired into," said the Doctor, and, with a keen glance at the other, he passed from the room, and then out of the house, abruptly.

He returned in a quarter of an hour, went into a sitting-room on the ground-floor, and sent for the nurse, who had not yet gone.

"Come in and close the door, Mrs. Jones," he said, when the venerable matron appeared; "I have a question of great importance to ask you. You remember when Mr. Harry Jarvis became insensible, and I left the room for an hour?"

"Yes, sir, surely."

"Did he come to himself while I was away?"

"Not for a moment, sir."

"Did you go to the bureau for anything?"

"Lor, sir! no. What should I do that for?"

"Why, it is a serious matter, Mrs. Jones. I read Mr. Jarvis's will to him just before I left, and replaced it in a drawer in that bureau; and now it is gone. Has any one been in the room while you were out of it?"

"Not a soul, sir, except this Mr. Jarvis."

"Recollect; can you swear that you did not leave the assistant, who came in, alone there?"

"Yes, sir, that I can. No one's been alone in that room but Mr. Jarvis, s'elp me."

"Well, then, it is a serious thing, and a great responsibility for you, Mrs. Jones. People will say that you have destroyed the will."

"Me, sir! Me! Oh, lor! what should a poor old woman like me want to do such a thing for?"

"What, indeed, Mrs. Jones, considering he left you ten pounds and his clothes, which you will never get if the will is not found."

"Ten pounds!" cried the old woman, "did he leave me ten pounds, though? Ah! he was a kind gentleman, he was—and his brother only to give me a couple of sovereigns!"

"Oh, Mr. Ernest Jarvis gave you a couple of sovereigns, did he? What was that for?"

"Well, sir, it was not to talk; but if I am like to get into trouble, and poor master had done the generous by me so, why should I hold my tongue? He burned a paper, sir; I don't know what it was, will or what, but I come up prosmisuous, having just been down-stairs for a cup of tea, leaving him alone in the room—for friends likes to be alone with their dead for just a bit sometimes, you know, sir—and I opened the door gentle like, as one does going into a death-chamber, and he was a-burning something; and when he saw me he looked all flurried like."

"I'm burning some letters my poor brother would not like to be seen, he says; 'he told me to do it last I saw him,' he says; 'but don't say anything about it, Mrs. Jones, because people are so inquisitive;' and then he put a couple of bits of gold in my hand."

"And is that all?"

"That's all, sir, except what I heard him a-muttering."

"Ah! what was that?"

"Well, sir, I come in gentle, and as I heard him a-speaking as I opened the door, I hung back a-bit, not liking to intrude under the circumstances; and so I heard him a-saying, 'Five thousand pounds! What should I give him five thousand pounds for?' and then he crammed the paper into the fire with the poker."

"Oh, he said that, did he? Well, nurse, you were quite right to tell me; you have cleared yourself, at any rate. Tell one of the servants to go and ask Mr. Jarvis if I can see him."

"Do you think I shall get my ten pounds, sir?" asked the woman, with the door-handle in her hand.

"Yes, I fancy you will," said the Doctor.

Like most unsuspecting people, the Doctor was very indignant and unforgiving when he did find any one out, and he looked quite another man as he walked to and fro with compressed lips and flashing eyes, waiting for Ernest Jarvis's answer to his message.

He brought it in person, entering the room with an air which he vainly attempted to render jaunty and dehaunt.

"Well, Doctor," said he, "what is this particular business you have with me?"

"You mean beggar!" said the other. "Your poor brother was right when he said, on my first pleading in your favour, that you were bad and dirty to the core. But abuse is thrown away upon you. You have got the heart of a pig, and the spirit of a rascal; and it would be waste of time to try and make you ashamed of yourself."

"What do you mean, sir?"

"I mean that through my exertions, and mine only, you came into a large fortune, and that you have repaid me by burning your brother's will, because I was left five thousand pounds in it."

"Nonsense! What do I care for the absurd calumnies of a disappointed man, who has no proof of what he asserts!" said Jarvis, turning very pale nevertheless.

"Proof? I have positive proof. Not legal proof, perhaps. I do not care for that, as I shall never bring you into a court of law."

At these last words the colour came back into the other's cheeks, and a look of triumph lit up his eyes, as he replied—

"I can pardon your excitement. It must be very trying to find that Harry has forgotten all his fine promises to you."

"Have you no sense of shame—no spark of gratitude in your composition?" cried the indignant Doctor. "Why, at the time when I first wrote to you, to come and seek for reconciliation with your brother, he had actually made a will, properly drawn up and attested, by which he left me the whole of his property, burdened only with an allowance of a hundred a year, to be paid you quarterly."

"What is the use of that?"

"Use? It was of no use last night; but now that you have burned the more recent will made in your own favour, it is of every use. Your brother did not destroy that first will, but gave it to me to keep as a memorial of what he was pleased to call my generosity and disinterestedness. I did keep it. I went home just now to fetch it, and there it is. Ah! would you?" added the Doctor, as Jarvis, maddened with disappointment, made an ineffectual clutch at the document. "Hands off, you scoundrel!"

The fellow sank into a chair, almost fainting.

"But you would not—you will not—take advantage of—of——" gasped he.

"Do not flatter yourself with false hopes," said the Doctor. "I shall have the will proved at Doctors' Commons, take possession of the property, pay you twenty-five pounds a quarter until D. T. kills you, and not a penny more, though you begged at my kitchen door for it."

"I'll say that you destroyed the second will. I'll say——"

"Say what you like, and take what legal proceedings you like. I am not going to bandy any more words with you," and the Doctor left the house.

Ernest Jarvis left Gonway that afternoon, and did not return for the funeral, for which the Doctor, who was chief mourner, made all arrangements. He then proved the will, took peaceable possession of the property, bought an estate of a thousand acres, mostly grass; bred horses, tried to get into Parliament, and failed, and became a model country gentleman generally. He did not keep to the letter of his threat, but sent Ernest Jarvis occasional ten-pound notes, in addition to the prescribed allowance, until he had softening of the brain and became imbecile, and then he saw that he was comfortably attended to.

There is this difference between greatness and fortune—some men, indeed, are born to fortunes, and some achieve fortunes, but very, very few like the Doctor—I humbly beg his pardon, like Frank Grainger, Esq., J. P.—have a fortune thrust upon them.

LEWIS HOUGH.

HESTER MORLEY'S PROMISE.

BY HESBA STRETTON,

AUTHOR OF "THE DOCTOR'S DILEMMA," ETC. ETC.

CHAPTER THE ELEVENTH A DIRECT EFFORT.

FROM the time that Miss Waldron had become acquainted with the fact that a Popish Frenchwoman dwelt in idolatrous darkness within sight of the

very walls of the chapel, where the Gospel was preached every Sunday, though in a language unknown to her, she had resolved upon making her the subject of one of those direct efforts which had often so signal an effect upon the poor women of

her district and mothers' meetings. She ordered from John Morley a packet of English tracts translated into French, and with these and a French Bible in her large satchel, she sallied forth, the morning after her father's interview with Carl, to seek the dwelling of the benighted foreigner.

It was about midday, and Madame Lawson was regaling herself with a savoury ragout, highly seasoned with garlic, which she was wont to have cooked in her landlady's oven. She had added to her repast a glass or two of good Burgundy, sup-

which her brother possessed. She had never been out of her native isle, and her father, entertaining a true old-fashioned British contempt of foreigners, had never invited any to his house. Her acquaintance with the language was, in consequence, almost limited to a perusal of *Telemaque* and the works of Madame de Genlis, which she had gone through with her dictionary and a master. Madame received her with a torrent of *parols*, of which she barely understood one word; but Miss Waldron was not to be daunted. She laid her packet of



"APPEARED AT THE HALF-OPEN DOOR"

plied to her by Robert Waldron, which she could only take at those meals when her son was absent, for fear of his discovering the secret of her distinguished visitor. She was in her most exhilarated mood. The noonday happened to be one of the rarely bright moments of November, and the high window of her garret caught the sunshine, while all the court below was in gloom. There was no fire in the grate, but a warm *chauffe-pied* filled with wood-ashes from the oven stood under her feet. The three little bronze crucifixes over the empty fireplace shone full in the brightest of the sunbeams, and were the first objects upon which Miss Waldron's eyes fell as she entered the garret.

Miss Waldron had not the proficiency in French

tracts upon the table and seated herself on a distant chair.

"You are a Frenchwoman," she said austerely.

Yes, madame was a Frenchwoman from Bourgoyne, and she could not speak one word of English—not one word. To speak English was like swallowing fish-bones.

"You are a Papist," observed Miss Waldron, who had scarcely understood the previous remarks.

Papist! She did not comprehend what was Papist.

"Your religion is Papist," said Miss Waldron, pointing to the little crosses and rosary.

Yes, yes; that was her religion. She was a Catholic. That was her chaplet; she said her

chaplet twice a day, sometimes oftener, if she was ~~free~~. When she felt very sad, she said a little prayer first, and then sang a song. Would Miss Waldron like to hear a song?

Without waiting for permission, the gay old lady started off with one of her merriest songs; her eyes growing smaller and brighter, and the cunning little wrinkles starting out more and more wickedly at every line. Miss Waldron could not catch a word of the song, but she trembled at the thought of what she might be listening to, and her face grew a dull red. She moved uneasily in her chair, and glanced towards the door. At the last line of the song madame winked—positively winked at her visitor, and then crossed herself in so sudden a manner that Miss Waldron was still more dismayed.

"I am Miss Waldron," she said, entrencing herself behind the dignity of her name.

Waldron! Bah! She could not speak such a word. But was it not the name of the fine young milord Robert, who did her the honour of paying her a visit sometimes? Quite an English milord, but with a beautiful toilette, and with rings on his fingers, who could speak French like a Frenchman.

Miss Waldron was puzzled. It was not at all in Robert's line to visit poor old women, yet she knew that he could speak French fluently, and it was not probable that another person possessing equal proficiency could be found in Little Aston. But what could bring Robert there? The thought of Hester flashed across her like a ray of light.

"He is my brother," she answered slowly and with some difficulty, as she pondered over a totally unprepared phrase. She had arranged beforehand a ~~collation~~ which ought to have proceeded like a ~~collation~~, but she was completely thrown out. She stammered and hesitated, but at last she was compelled to put her question in a bald unvarnished manner. "Does he meet a girl called Hester Morley here?" she asked.

The smooth clean face of madame assumed the innocence of a child, combined with virtuous indignation. She answered firmly in the negative, with a gesture of utter repudiation, but Miss Waldron's aroused suspicions were not to be rocked to sleep again. Hester came here, and she had learned that Robert did so too. What could it mean? Could it have any meaning but one?

"I am afraid," she said, in very incorrect French, for she was agitated and her tongue tingled to speak in strong English, "that you are a very wicked woman. I knew you were a Papist and a Frenchwoman, but I am afraid you are worse. I came here with the purpose of doing you good, but I fear it is impossible. I shall speak about you to my father, Mr Waldron, of Aston Court, who is a magistrate."

Madame Lawson could not understand a syllable

of this speech, but she could see that her visitor was very greatly displeased. It occurred to her that she had come on a mission of suspicion and espionage, and she resolved to throw her off the scent. Her brown eyes—eyes which betray nothing—met Miss Waldron's gaze, and a sinister air of intelligence spread over her face.

"Mademoiselle Hester comes to see me sometimes," she said very distinctly, "but never, oh! never when milord Robert comes. There is a young priest at the chapel where mademoiselle makes her prayers, and in England the priests marry. He is very handsome and young, like Mademoiselle Hester. It is possible he may marry himself with her."

Miss Waldron's heart sank very low. That such a calamity was possible she could not conceal from herself, but it had never been put into words and uttered in her hearing. She was lost in distressed and perplexed thought, not able to ply the old woman with clever questions. Madame regarded her with a crafty smile. Grant had once brought Carl to see her, but the visit had made little impression upon her, except as awakening an odd interest in the priest who could marry if he chose. She was conscious that she had made a happy hit, though she did not know exactly where it wounded.

"Does Hester love the young priest?" asked Miss Waldron at last, unable to cloak the inquiry more skillfully.

"It is necessary to love one's director," she answered, with a leer full of insinuation, "and he is so handsome, *mon la petite*. It is also his duty to love all his people."

Both madame and Miss Waldron had been too engrossed to catch the sound of the staircase creaking under a footstep; but at this moment a sallow and withered face, with two eyes set in it like burning lamps, appeared at the half-open door. Madame uttered a little scream, and desperately snatched the bottle of Burgundy from the table, putting it by a sleight of hand into its hiding-place under her bed. But the new-comer paid no attention to her movements. He had taken off his old paper cap, and fastened upon Miss Waldron a gaze which did not permit his eyelids to wink. She experienced a very peculiar sensation of discomfort under the fixed scrutiny of these burning eyes.

"It is my son, madame," said Lawson's mother, introducing him with an air of ceremony.

"Can you speak English, my good man?" inquired Miss Waldron.

"Certainly," replied Lawson; "but, before we go any further, may I ask what your name is?"

"Miss Waldron, of Aston Court," she said with emphasis and dignity.

"So I guessed," he cried, clenching his hands. "You are a lady, and I'd be sorry to frighten you,

but it is as much as your life is worth to come here. I am Mr. Morley's workman, and love Miss Hester. I knew her mother, and the second Mrs. Morley. Now you'll see you'd better not come here again. This is my house, and I will have nobody in it belonging to you or yours."

"I came here to convert your mother," said Miss Waldron with great courage.

"Then she must go unconverted," he said, his tone rising to a higher pitch, "It is not safe for you here. John Morley and me are waiting—waiting till the right time comes; for there is deadly hatred betwixt us and you. You had better go at once, while I warn you. I'm a quiet man, but you had better go."

His voice had risen shrilly with each sentence, till now it rang in her ears with a shriek, which the children at play below heard, and stopped suddenly to listen. Miss Waldron seized her satchel and fled; and, as she hurried through the court, the window above was opened violently, and her loosened packet of tracts fluttered down about her like a flock of frightened doves.

CHAPTER THE TWELFTH.

CARL'S EMBARRASSMENT.

As Miss Waldron issued from the low passage leading to the court, Carl was hurrying past with long strides, and with his head bowed down as if heavy with momentous thoughts. She uttered a cry of joyful relief, and almost flung herself upon his arm. There was so evident a fright, both in her flurried manner and the startled expression on her face, that Carl gazed about him and peered down the narrow alley to ascertain the cause of it. She sobbed hysterically; and having sufficient presence of mind to take advantage of the opportunity, she did not attempt to control her agitation, as she must have done had she been compelled to pursue her way alone, or had she met any other acquaintance. She leaned heavily and helplessly upon the arm of the embarrassed Carl. The street was quiet, but he glanced up and down it with a feeling of dismay. They needed but one or two observant passers-by, to attract a whole crowd about them from the surrounding houses. The key of the chapel vestry was in his pocket, and the chapel was on the other side of the street.

"Would you like to sit down for a few minutes in the vestry?" he asked.

"Oh, yes! yes!" said Miss Waldron, between her sobs.

Carl led her across the street, and once again he cast a keen glance about him. There were only a few children to be seen at play—but no coming up the pavement was a light and tall figure, dressed in a soft grey dress which he knew very well to be Hester's. She was on the sunny side of the street,

dazzled perhaps by the white wintry sunshine; for she did not seem to see them in the shade, though he was a long time in fitting the key into the lock, in the hope that she would recognise them, and he could make a sign to her to come across to them. Miss Waldron did not see her.

"There is Miss Morley," said Carl; "shall I run over and call her to come to you?"

"No," answered Miss Waldron, plainly enough, and without a sob this time; "I would much rather not see her at this moment; I have something very extraordinary to tell you, Carl."

The name Carl seemed to fall from her lips unconsciously in her state of excitement; but he felt a nervous tremor at the sound of it. He opened the vestry door and went in, with Miss Waldron still supporting herself upon his arm. He placed her in his own chair beside the table, and stood opposite to her before the empty fireplace. Above it hung usually the portrait of a distinguished divine of their denomination, in a full-bottomed wig and white bands, at the back of which was a small looking-glass, where the pastor of the church could take a stealthy glimpse of himself before ascending the pulpit. Carl had turned the portrait with its face to the wall the preceding Sunday; and now, instead of the smooth and pious physiognomy of the eminent minister, he saw his own troubled features, with the straight eyebrows knitted and the lips pressed sternly together. Miss Waldron began to sob less deeply, but she sat with her head averted, and with an air of modest confusion which almost drove him frantic.

"Do you feel better?" he asked; "can I do anything for you?"

"I am better," she answered faintly; "in a minute or two I will tell you all."

For that minute or two Carl set himself to conquer his impatience and irritation. Why should he feel so different to-day to what he had felt only the day before yesterday? She was his friend still; and he had only heard Annie's partial, and no doubt absurd, notion that she was something more than a friend. A true friendship between man and woman ought to be able to bear a greater shock than the misapprehension and misconstruction of others. He almost detested himself for the ready and ridiculous vanity which had caused him to give credence to the story; yet the hot blood mounted to his beating temples as he caught a sidelong glance from Miss Waldron.

"Carl," she said, in a voice as if it was still necessary to gasp for breath at each word—"I may call you Carl now, I think."

What could he answer? He bowed his head gravely, but without raising his eyes from the floor.

"I am a little older than you," she continued, with a frank air, "and I am so used to hear your

dear sister call you Carl. That is how I slipped into it. To call you Mr. Bramwell now would seem formal. I am thankful it is only you who have seen my agitation. It is foolish and silly, I know, but then I am nothing but a weak foolish woman."

"You have been very much alarmed," remarked Carl falteringly.

"Oh, exceedingly!" exclaimed Miss Waldron, her hand pressed upon her breast; "and I am so grateful to the Providence which sent you here at this moment. It is but another proof that our steps are all numbered."

On his part Carl felt no particular thankfulness for having been found on the spot at that special moment; but he rebuked the thought as it suggested itself to him.

"I must tell you all," said Miss Waldron, "but to you only. It must be a secret between us two. I would not have my father made uneasy for the world; and if I need any counsel or protection, you will give me both. I can count upon you, dear Carl?"

"Certainly," he replied.

Miss Waldron's narrative contained several details not to be found in the preceding chapter, all tending to cast a lustre on her own conduct, and which might be supposed by an uncharitable spirit to have existed only in her own imagination. She omitted also the mention of madame's suggestion with respect to Carl himself, though she was tearfully eloquent in connection with her suspicions concerning her brother and Hester being in the habit of seeing one another in the old Frenchwoman's garret. Here Carl possessed a knowledge of which Miss Waldron was ignorant, and nothing appeared more probable to him than that Robert Waldron had seized upon any opportunity of meeting Hester. But that she should consent to these clandestine interviews was a sure convincing proof that he had won her affection; and she had fallen into the snare through dread of her father. Could this be the sorrow which old Mr. Watson had foreseen for Hester? had he received some hint of the miserable attachment she had formed? What could he do in the matter?

With his darkened face reflected in the little sacred mirror, Carl let these first thoughts run riot in his brain, while Miss Waldron meandered on in a gently purling stream of sentiment, which, to speak the truth, did more credit to her heart than her head, and which murmured idly against Carl's ear as a brook laps unheeded against the granite base of a rock. He had no notion of what she was saying. He was dethroning the image of Hester from its pure, sweet, girlish supremacy, and setting it beside the image of Robert Waldron. The mere thought of such a union shocked him. He turned away from it with revulsion, as if it were a crime.

It flashed suddenly across him that Hester had been intended for him; he knew it and felt sure of it. Their spirits were of one kind; their hearts beat with the same pulse. If she had only waited a little longer before surrendering the treasure of her love! But she had cast away her pearls, and had no longer any to bestow upon him to whom they would have been wealth beyond price.

Carl suffered more intense pain this morning than he had done the night before while listening to Mr. Waldron. There had been the consolation of doubt then, but there was none now. Hester met Robert clandestinely, and it must be because she loved him.

"I ought not to have been alarmed, even then," said Miss Waldron; "I ought to have stayed myself upon a promise."

"Certainly," replied Carl, not hearing what she said.

"But I am only a feeble woman," she continued; "we are not like you others, with your strong minds. I am afraid you will despise me for the future."

She had never before pleaded her feminine feebleness, but now she looked up to him with an appealing and helpless gaze. From Hester's eyes such a glance would have penetrated the profoundest depths of his heart, but from Miss Waldron it had no such effect.

"Despise you!" he said; "oh, no! why should I? No doubt you have cause for alarm."

"And you will esteem me, and—care for me as much as ever?" she asked with a recurring sob.

"To be sure," he replied; "why do you trouble yourself afresh, Miss Waldron? There is no more cause for fear. As soon as you feel yourself equal to the exertion, I will see you safe home."

"Carl," she said in a bashful and hesitating tone, "if you really feel that we are friends, and especially now we have a secret between us, and I have only you to look to for advice and protection, I wish you would leave off calling me Miss Waldron. You may call me by my name, Sophia."

"But nobody calls you Sophia," exclaimed Carl, with alarmed earnestness.

"But I will allow you to do so," she answered condescendingly; "it is less distant, and more friendly. To the rest of the world I remain Miss Waldron; to you I am Sophia."

Carl murmured his thanks indistinctly. It needed a great effort to save him from a lack of courtesy. But she was a good woman, a member of his church, a lady, and the daughter of his patron. All these titles gave her so many claims to his respect; and even if it were true, as Annie had intimated, that she distinguished him with her preference, that was no reason whatever why he should treat her with impoliteness or ill-temper. There was a mingled sense of shame and sorrow for her,

which lent to his manner a sufficient gentleness to blind Miss Waldron's eyes, already dazzled with self-importance. She intimated that she was now ready to undertake the walk home; and leaning confidently, but not too heavily, upon his arm, they traversed together the watchful streets of Little Aston and the glades of the park, while unutterable sentiments filled the heart of Sophia Waldron.

CHAPTER THE THIRTEENTH.

WHAT MUST SHE DO?

IT was a noticeable sight, and one fraught with tacit inferences, which had greeted Hester's eyes as she turned the corner of the street, and saw Carl and Miss Waldron about to enter the chapel vestry, upon a day and hour when there was neither a public service nor a more private meeting of any kind. She had not chosen to recognise them, for the question asked by Annie, whether she had not observed something peculiar in Miss Waldron's manner towards Carl, had been ranking in her mind ever since; and the pain it produced there set her on her guard, both against herself and them.

She was in a transition state of moods and emotions, of which she could not breathe a word to any one. From the first moment her eyes had looked upon Carl's face, with its fine, clear, happy, and good aspect, so differing in its charm from the handsomer features of Robert Waldron, she had felt that there were other classes of men in the world than those she had met in her narrow sphere. Hitherto she had found no man stronger in nature than herself; for in her heart of hearts Hester knew herself less weak in the presence of trial and temptation than any of the people about her, with the exception, perhaps, of Grant. She was, though Mr. Waldron and Robert did not suspect it, little pliable to outer influences, and not easily moulded into a form foreign to herself.

But Carl was stronger than she. She looked up to him from beneath the long fringe of her brown eyelashes, mentally acknowledging him her superior. Sunday after Sunday she listened to him critically, and never caught a false tone or an affected one. She found her mind pondering over his thoughts, and confessing her belief in them. She began to feel as if she was his sole listener; the congregation might be there, but they could not comprehend him as she did.

A very sweet and subtle impression had taken hold of her, that Carl had been more eloquent for her than for any one else in his church. Now and then, when he had allowed his genius a higher flight than ordinary, and had soared far above the heads of his simple flock, his kindled eye had sought hers and held it in a fascinated gaze, while he elaborated and concluded his thought; and there had seemed a secret understanding between them, more

perfect than that of words. But now Hester discovered that there was a second listener, with whom, perhaps, Carl had a still more intimate and delicate unison; who might have the privilege of suggesting the themes of his eloquence, and who certainly could converse with him familiarly about his sermons. When Annie had plainly hinted at Miss Waldron's preference for her brother, Hester, yielding to a very natural and feminine feeling of jealousy, had observed that she was a very pious woman. It was all she could say. To her Miss Waldron had ceased to be imposing or clever; and she had never appeared engaging. Hester scarcely cared to put herself into comparison with her on the score of beauty; and she felt that she was her superior mentally. But in goodness? In the one thing needful to a good man like Carl, how far she fell behind the acknowledged saint of the church at Little Aston!

Hester humiliated herself all that afternoon, and in consequence was not so pleasant a companion to Lawson as usual. She set vigorously to work to root out the tares from her heart, one of them being her young love for Carl. She made a number of vows, every one difficult of performance. Her busy hands did not pause because of the inward storm; but Lawson saw more than one tear stealing down her cheeks, as she smoothed the gold-leaf with her delicate fingers.

He was himself excited, and could scarcely refrain from telling Hester of the occurrence of the morning. But her cloudy brow, and her mouth set into a firm line of decision and of secret conflict, silenced him. During the last few months she had grown out of the pensive and almost timid child, into a mistress who was gentle and gracious in her manner, it was true, but who knew her own dignity and upheld it. When she spoke to him this afternoon, her voice was set in a clear but mournful key, and her words were few. Lawson did not dare to tell her how he had encountered Miss Waldron in his mother's room, and had forbidden her ever to intrude there again. He would leave it for madame to relate in her own way.

At six o'clock Hester descended from the work-room and made tea for her father, still busy with herself. She could not decide whether she would go to the week-night service at chapel, or stay at home to pursue her melancholy task of rooting up the tares. She debated the point until it was almost too late, and then she dressed herself in a panic, and sped in frantic haste up the dark street. The fine morning had merged into an evening of thick, cold rain, which was falling heavily, and splashed upon the pavement as she hurried along. Scarcely a creature was to be seen. Here and there a resolute worshipper, like herself, was trudging along under a wet umbrella, but she knew that the congregation would be a small one. And then it

all at once occurred to her, with a chill colder than the rain, that very probably Carl himself would be absent, as he was not very well. She stopped at the door to regain her breath, and to listen if she could hear his voice within. Two or three persons passed her—one of them a poor woman shabbily dressed in a widow's garb, who paused to look inquisitively at her from under her rusty crape veil. Then Hester went in, caught for a moment the full, grave, searching gaze of Carl from his low reading-desk, and going on to her accustomed seat, she sank upon her knees, with a strange, almost intolerable sense of pain.

For once Hester did not hear a word of Carl's sermon, though she caught the sadness and unwonted languor of his voice. As she left the chapel she saw the carriage from Aston Court still waiting at the door, though Mr. and Miss Waldron were already seated in it. She crossed over the street, and hid in the archway of the court, simply to wound herself with the sight of Carl driving away with her rival. While she stood in the rain and the darkness, he would be whirled off in comfort and luxury. Hester felt for the first time how poor she was. Miss Waldron was rich as well as good, and Carl had made a wise choice. The worldly sneer had scarcely risen to her lips when she shrank from it instinctively, and drove the suspicion back to the unworthy regions whence it had come to assail her.

She watched the little congregation dropping away by twos and threes, and she suddenly recalled

to mind a childish play of the lost Rose, who had often amused her by watching the creeping sparks die out of a smouldering piece of paper. Why did the memory of Rose come back now? Carl was just coming out of chapel, the last of all, and ran through the rain to the carriage, into which he sprang with the freedom and familiarity of one quite at home with those inside. She saw it roll away down the street, and then she prepared to follow, slowly and sorrowfully, through the beating of the storm.

But had Carl been the last to leave the chapel, where a few lamps were still burning, though they were being put out one by one? Hester cast a look towards it, and saw the poor widow in her shabby mourning sitting desolately upon one of the steps of the portico. She was in a mood for lingering. She was in a mood, too, for pity and compassion towards any form of suffering. There was also a fine and very insidious sense of pleasure in the idea of engaging in some good work, while Miss Waldron was wrapped in luxury and enjoyment. She would be, for the moment, beating her on her own ground. Hester recrossed the street. The stranger was crouching upon the lowest step, with the rain driving full upon her. She seemed to have reached this place and then fallen, for she was lying along the stone in an attitude of complete helplessness. Hester stooped, and laid her hand gently on her shoulder.

END OF CHAPTER THE THIRTEENTH.

OUR FRIEND THE OCTOPUS.



HOW do you take your pleasure? Do you consult your own tastes, or do you allow yourself to be dictated to? I adopt the latter course; and very often enjoy myself without perceiving it. Indeed, if I were merely to judge by my own sensations, I should sometimes think that my treats were positively annoying, or even painful; and it is quite a relief to me that my friend Oakheart has wearied of catching conger eels off Brighton.

It was probably success that cloyed him; for catching a conger eel is, though a fascinating feat in anticipation, a monotonous process when constantly repeated. And Oakheart repeated it very often: if many fishermen were as successful as he was, congers would soon be scarce. He discovered a place where there had once been a wreck; and there the creatures formed a most populous colony, which proves the existence of tradition among the

fishes, for the last biscuit (let us avoid painful ideas, and think of biscuit only) must have been nibbled by the great-grandsire of the oldest present inhabitant.

And my friend was in the habit of taking me with him; experience was of no value to me, as he always managed to persuade me that I had enjoyed myself last time, was enjoying myself this, and would enjoy myself on the next occasion. And perhaps he was right, if it is a fact that one never knows when one is really happy. He had a large undecked boat, dandy-rigged, which he managed with the assistance of one man, who attended to the sails while Oakheart steered.

I did not dislike the start, and when the sea was calm it was interesting to see how he found his wreck. He got a tower out Worthing way and a clump of trees in a line in one direction, and the Hove lighthouse and a church in another, and dropped anchor over the exact spot. Then numerous lines were baited and thrown out, and soon enormous conger eels began to be hauled in, and

stabbed in the head with a triangular dagger, which had the effect of calming them.

I was sitting, then, with a line in my hand on one of these occasions, looking out for jerks, and trying to be quite absorbed in the desire for them, so as to ignore the tickling in my sides, and other well-known premonitory symptoms which occurred whenever the boat sank down or rose up, when I felt something on my hook, hauled in, and presently a little monster bundled on board; a thing like Medusa's scalp it seemed to me at first sight; and then I perceived that the snakes grew not out of flesh, but poulp.

"Take care, sir; keep back; mind it don't touch you!" cried the sailor; and there was slight self-denial in obeying his direction, for the creature did not tempt one to pet it. So he killed it, and we looked at its snaky tentacles, with their suckers underneath, and learned that it was a cuttle-fish, and finally cut it up for bait, which proved most killing. No conger can resist it; and once get a bit of it on the hook, it will stick there, for it is like india-rubber.

A short time afterwards (I speak of many years ago) a most amusing and interesting book was published, under the title of "Life in Normandy," a work which ranks with my greatest favourites, "Tristram Shandy," the "Peau de Chagrin," "Vanity Fair," "Midshipman Easy," "The Old Curiosity Shop," "Childe Harold," and "A Cruise upon Wheels." I am always reading one of these books over again, instead of risking boredom over the new one which I have started to the library to get. I have never finished them, as one does the majority of works, even of those one likes very much; they are friends I do not want to lose sight of for very long. I much wish that I had never read "The Count of Monte Christo," that I might have the exquisite pleasure of doing so; but I should not care to read it again.

Well, in "Life in Normandy" I found an account of my cuttle-fish, only grown very much larger, and called a minaur. Two Englishmen, living for awhile on the coast of Normandy, go out hand-net fishing constantly at low water, like all the rest of the inhabitants; and their attention is called to part of the sea-wall which is dilapidated, tons of stones lying a yard or two from the main wall. When an old woman, who, with all her family, is also out fishing, abuses the minaur that caused this damage, they express astonishment at the notion that a fish can have done it; but the old lady reiterates her assertion, and points to two yellow marks in the sand, where their holes are. She had on a former occasion broken a clip, or boat-hook, in one of the creatures; but now Frederic, her daughter's betrothed, has brought a pickaxe, and they intend making a serious effort to destroy the mischievous creatures. When the

fishing was over, then Madame le Moine (the old lady aforesaid) and her daughter, Angela, each took a boat-hook, Frederic his pickaxe, and the party slid again into the water.

"Frederic began first by scraping a considerable hole in the sand with the pickaxe; he then took one of the clips, thrust it into the hole, and gave it a violent jerk; it was drawn deeper into the sand after this jerk.

"That's into him!" he exclaimed, and he gave the end of the clip into Madame le Moine's hand; little Matilde took hold of it also."

Another clip was fixed in it, and then the pickaxe was brought into play; all hauling with all their might, and Frederic shifting the position of his pickaxe and jerking. After a violent jerk, "something like a large eel appeared above the water, and Frederic nearly fell back.

"That is one of its arms," he said."

The water having become black, they pulled steadily for a bit till it cleared. Then the two Englishmen who were standing on the damaged dyke, looking down on the operations, could distinguish "two white substances that were twisting in the water like two large eels; several more could be partially seen half hid under the sand or large stones. The clips were fastened in a bag that looked like a man's cotton night-cap, for it was much the same shape, size, and colour." At last all the arms were torn by the pickaxe from their hold but one, which was "fixed to a stone of about two or three hundredweight, which, in spite of its size, was dragged out of its bed in the sand by the united strength of the old woman and the two girls. Frederic hooked his pickaxe round the remaining arm, gave the usual jerks, it gave way, and a long mass of nasty-looking stuff was lifted in the air," and presently afterwards was deposited on the dyke.

"It looked like an enormous cuttle-fish . . . but the feelers were fully as long as a man's arm, and were covered on one side, from one end to the other, with lumps rather bigger than a hazel-nut. . . . These lumps opened to the size of a shilling, and then contracted till they looked like warts. . . . The fisher-girls dread them, and no wonder. As we walked home, my companion told me that her hand was once grasped and held tight by a large minaur, when she was groping in a hole for crabs. The tide was rising; she could neither free her arm nor drag the cuttle from its fortress. She had no weapons." Fortunately a fisherman heard her screams, came to her, and killed the creature, but the water was up to her waist.

Victor Hugo's wonderful novel appeared, and the cuttle-fish made a great impression upon every reader of "Les Travailleurs de la Mer." The fight between it and the hero of the story has been very commonly considered sensational and extravagant,

but in Beale's "History of the Sperm Whale" it is related, on the authority of Sir Grenville Temple, that a Sardman captain, while bathing at Jerbeh, in the Mediterranean, was seized and drowned by one of these creatures in four feet of water. Nay, Mr. Beale himself had an adventure with a minaur which much resembles Victor Hugo's imaginary episode. He was searching for shells upon the rocks of the Bonin Islands, when he saw a very large one creeping upon its eight feelers towards the surf, which had only just receded from it, and he tried to stop it, when the creature sprang upon his bare arm, and clung to it with its suckers, endeavouring to get its beak in a position to bite. He describes its slimy grasp as extremely sickening. Fortunately a companion was near, who had a large knife, wherewith he killed the thing, which was then cut off by small pieces at a time.

When this poulp is called a very large one, it is meant that it was large in comparison with those

ordinarily caught by fishermen; it was about four feet—that is, across its expanded arms—and its body was the size of a clenched hand: a little fellow compared to Victor Hugo's. But there are well-authenticated records of far bigger poulp. Dr. Spence, of Lertick, communicated one to Dr. Allman, Professor of Natural History in Edinburgh, in 1862. The creature was thrown ashore on the Shetlands; its body measured nine feet, and its arms were sixteen feet in length! Such a brute would tuck Mr. Sayers under one arm, Mr. Heenan under another, and walk off with the pair.

The cuttle-fish is a fashionable monster now; he is called an octopus, and holds levées in aquariums, and disappoints sight-seers, first because he is of retiring habits, and next because he is so small. As for the first, how would *you* like to live in a glass house? For the second, he will probably grow formidable, if well fed, in time.

MY MAIDEN AND THE SEASONS.



HE breath of Spring blows freshly round;
A subtle odour haunts the mould;
The garden glitters, through its length,
With the blazed crocus gold.
O lady! type and bride of Spring,
Whose fitting lights art in our skies;
Her first faint rose is on thy cheek—
Her violets in thine eyes
The leaf grows broader in the sun,
The beam is trembling in the dew,
The lark is loud, above the rain:
Arise, and sing thou, too.
Open the wicket, O my queen!
And hasten down the paths apace;
The season needs its final charm—
The season needs thy face.

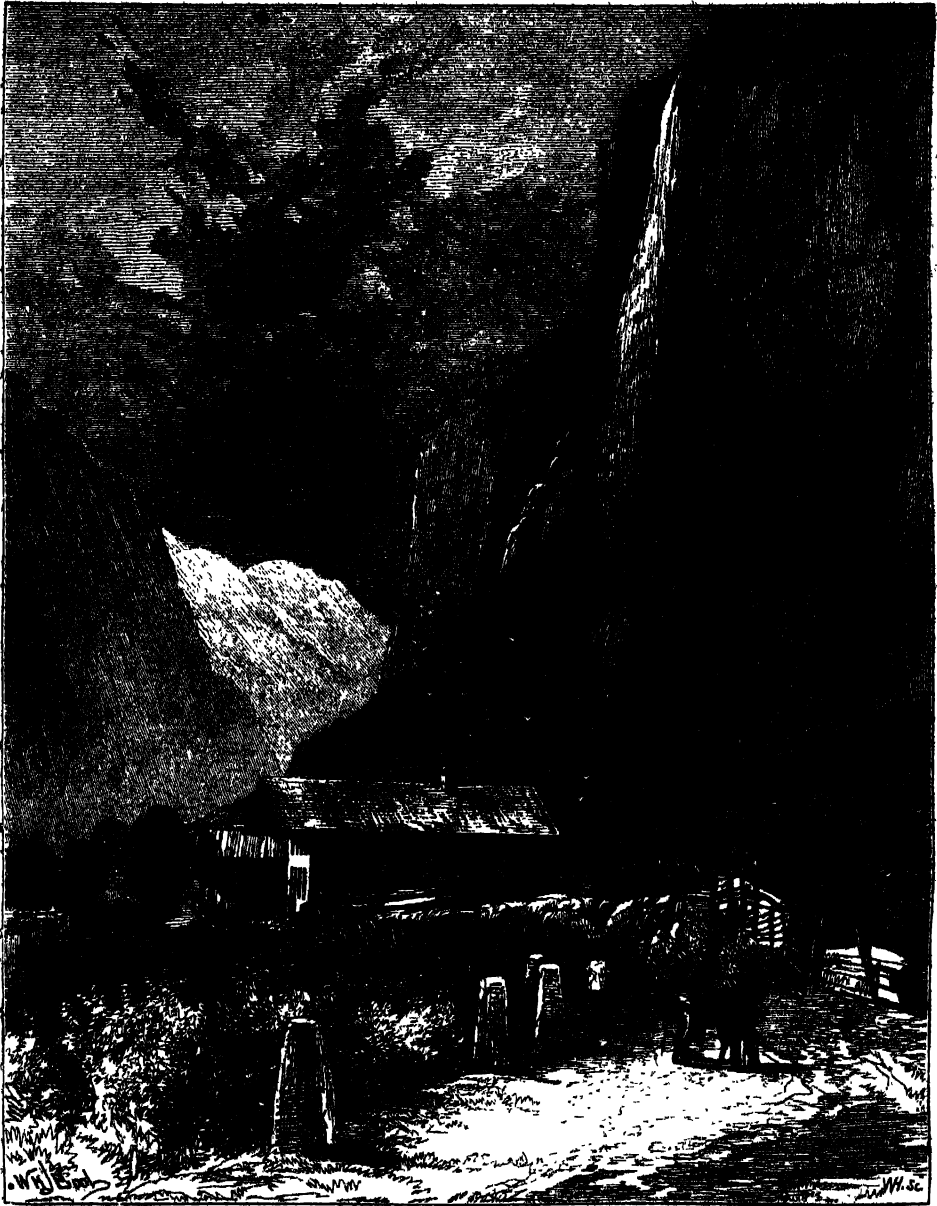
Summer! the tangled boughs are thick
With garnitures of breathing leaves;
Far inland shine the heated fields,
Far off, the ocean heaves.
The heavens are spotless; not a mist
Across the quivering blue will stir;
Low hangs the blossom from the bush,
Loud chirps the grasshopper.
The birds are silent in the glare,
The herds are huddled in the shade;
Then, be thy pathway where the foam
Lies linked in fretted braid.
For flying ships shall see thee pass,
And feel thy presence, from afar;
Whilst overhead the slanted mast
Burns twilight's rosy star.

Lo, Autumn! Through sad woods aflame
With blotted carmines, jewelled reds,
By girths of crepitating corn,
The sun-pleached leaves he treads.
The landrail's voice is loud and hoarse;
The smoke hangs changeless in the air;
The east is white, but half the west
Glow in one orange glare.
O love, when birds, and boughs, and grass
Droop in the seasonable ruth,
Come thou—with thee, perforce, must come
The year's fresh-flowered youth.
Thy songs will bless the wasting eves,
Whilst on the bare vines beats the rain,
And underneath the casement toils
The heaped, sweet-smelling wain.

Hark to that tumult down the wold!
'Tis Winter! Land and roof are white;
Myriads of unfamiliar stars
Break on us from the icy night.
The square thorp windows glimmer pale;
The evening bell sounds thick and slow,
Whilst, from its fastness in the north,
Is blown the hurrying snow.
Be with us, darling, through the hours
When the heaped hearth with logs is red,
And hurtling winds and shaking glass
Bewail the season dead.
In those deep eyes so pure, so frank,
We'll dream we see the swallow wing
His silent flight o'er turquoise seas
With tidings of the Spring.

J. F. O'DONNELL.

AVALANCHES AT THE WENGERN ALP.



THE STAUBBACH FALL.

FEW grander effects of nature can be witnessed than the avalanches which fall from the northern slope of the Jungfrau, if people would only take the trouble to obtain a little closer inspection of them than is afforded by the view from

the hotel on the Wengern Alp. Of all the thousands who cross over from Lauterbrunnen to Grindelwald, or in the reverse direction, in the course of the season, scarcely one in a hundred thinks of staying for more than a few hours on the summit of the pass,

though I know of no spot where a few days may be spent more enjoyably, or amid grander scenes.

I had walked over the Great Scheideck from Meiringen on one occasion, and stayed for the night at that charmingly situated hotel, the Black Eagle at Grindelwald, whence from my bed-room window in the early morning I could watch the exquisite effect of the rosy light upon the clear summits of the Viecherhorn, rising far above the cold blue grey of the lower Grindelwald glacier in the valley below, bounded on either side by the Mettenberg and the stupendous Eiger. By seven o'clock, in company with two friends, I was wending my way up the green slopes of the Little Scheideck, towards the Wengern Alp.

As we emerged from the huge shadow of the Eiger, the snows of the Monch and Jungfrau rose up on our left in that spotless purity which inspires, one with a sensation of reverence and awe. A few light clouds were hovering about the highest peaks, as if folding them in a soft embrace, and above all the sky spread clear and blue as a sapphire. The heat was intense, and while stopping for lunch at the new hotel at the summit of the pass, a few light avalanches at intervals slid down from the snow slopes and precipices in front of us; but they by no means prepared me for the stupendous effects I was destined to witness before I left the spot.

We went on after lunch to the lower hotel, about a mile from the culminating point of the pass, and exactly opposite the vast perpendicular precipices which the avalanches, dropping from the Jungfrau glacier, especially favour. Here I was determined to halt for a day or two, but in spite of my entreaties my friends persisted in going on, being anxious to reach Interlaken that evening.

After walking with them some little distance down the steep path towards Lauterbrunnen, I sauntered slowly back to the hotel, where I secured a room facing the mountains. I had just taken my seat near the window, for the purpose of looking quietly over some sketches I had made on the way up, when a crash, followed by a roar as of a mighty cataract, caused me to start up, and then for the first time I saw something really worthy the name of an avalanche.

An enormous mass of the glacier had broken off, detached probably by the noonday heat, or by the wind which had now sprung up, and which is always an active agent in these grand convulsions of nature. This mass slid rapidly down a steep slope of rock to a gully, immediately above a precipice of a thousand feet or more; becoming broken up on its rocky path, it wound serpent-like adown the sinuosities of this gully, with a stealthy gliding motion, which made one almost fancy that its career was at an end; but in an instant after, the whole mass poured over the edge of the precipice, with a deafening roar and volume that were

appalling; down to a ledge below, which again shivered the ice into still smaller atoms, and then over another precipice as vast. And so from ledge to ledge, until the mass was pounded and shivered to a fine dust, which was blown away from the foot of the fall like the spray from a huge cataract, while the few remaining larger masses slid rapidly down the slope of ice and snow at the bottom, far into the depths of the Trumelenen valley, two thousand feet below.

I stood gazing in utter amazement while this lasted, extending as it did over two or three minutes. I had had no conception of anything so stupendous. Thousands of tons must have fallen in that space of time, for I calculated that the cataract of ice must have been at least fifty or sixty feet in width, and was pouring over precipices to depths of quite six thousand feet. From that time to the hour of my departure, two days afterwards, these stupendous avalanches occurred so continually—on an average at least one an hour—that I positively at last ceased to look at them. Whether there was anything peculiar in the state of the atmosphere to cause them to fall with such frequency and volume, I know not, but I felt myself most especially favoured; for I have met with innumerable tourists who have passed over the Wengern Alp without having had the good fortune to see even one small avalanche.

The roar of these ice-cataracts was heard at intervals throughout the whole evening, and even in the middle of the night I was awakened by one which appeared from the sound to be more than usually grand, but on looking from the window I found that a thick night mist had arisen, and wrapped everything in a dense veil, so that not even the outline of the mountains was visible. I felt the presence of these giants of the Oberland, however, although they were unseen, and their mighty voices, speaking to me in the avalanches at this deep midnight hour, awakened very solemn sensations. At such an hour the mind invests these gigantic forms with a mysterious kind of life, as if they were sentient beings—far removed from the toil and care of the human kind—whose cold, sad eyes have watched the lower world unmoved through an eternity of the past.

At about seven the next morning, having breakfasted early, I was sauntering up the grassy slope of the mountain at the back of the hotel, intending to have half an hour's stroll. Surmounting one shoulder after another, I at length arrived at some loose rocks with scanty herbage between, and clambering up these, I saw a rocky summit about half a mile away, which appeared to be the highest attainable point in this direction. In another quarter of an hour I gained the point, and there found an intelligent German, who informed me that I was on the summit of the Lauberhorn. I

glanced around, and much did I rejoice that my wanderings had taken this direction, for it is impossible to convey in words the faintest idea of the beauty of the panorama at my feet. The rocky point on which I stood somewhat overhung the valley in the direction of Lauterbrunnen, so that there was a sheer drop of many thousand feet to the lower pastures of the Wengern Alp, and thence again to the depth of the valley, where the Staubbach fall, itself nearly a thousand feet in height, looked a mere cascade, and the lovely iris which forms in front of it at early morning, hung in a graceful arch, distinctly seen even at the height where we now stood. The whole line of the Lauterbrunnen valley could be traced to where it opens on to the delta around Interlaken.

To the left of the latter lay the lake of Thun and the stately Niesen, and beyond that again the plains of Northern Switzerland, stretching as far as the distant Jura. On our right lay the valley of Grindelwald, above which rose the green slopes of the Faulhorn, the hotel on the summit of which was distinctly visible. Still more to our right was the route we had followed two days before over the Great Scheideck, and the village of Grindelwald itself lay apparently within a stone's throw, although many miles away.

These were the softer features of the scene, but turning now to the south, peak after peak of the Oberland range rose far into the clear heavens, with a distinctness that made one almost feel that they could be touched by the hand. The mighty Wetterhorn, the Eiger, the Monch, the Jungfrau, the Silberhorn—always so pure and spotless—the Breithorn, and the snows of the Blümlis Alp were all comprised in that majestic panorama, and closer than they can be seen from any other point. Now and then a sound like subdued thunder told where a snow-avalanche slid rapidly from its rocky bed to some ledge or valley below; and those light clouds that form and disperse so mysteriously amid these mountain-peaks, even while one is gazing at them, lent a strange, weird enchantment to the scene.

It was a sight to make one almost sad from the intensity of its grandeur and beauty, and my German companion and myself were spell-bound for many minutes. Then we burst into raptures! He had been up many of the minor peaks—the Faulhorn, Eggischhorn, and the rest—but he unhesitatingly gave the palm to this; and yet, as I said before, thousands pass by on the beaten track, within an hour and a half's walk of the point, and make no attempt to ascend it.

After lingering here an hour, I made my way rapidly down the slope of the mountain towards the Eiger glacier, passing beds of delicious whortleberries, whose leaves, with their autumn tints, coloured the mountain-sides with the richest dyes. An hour's descent into the valley below the Little

Scheideck, and then a scramble up some rocks, brought me to the moraine at the edge of the glacier; but on mounting the ridge of loose stones of which it is formed, I found the glacier itself quite a hundred feet below me; so I tried further up, and at length reached a spot where a short slide down the loose débris brought me to the ice at a point where some fine crevasses approached the edge, and enabled me to study the lovely tints and strange formations within their depths.

Some drops of rain and gathering clouds warned me, however, that it was time to retreat, and after a walk of half an hour I found shelter at the Hôtel Bellevue, on the summit of the pass. The clouds shortly after dispersed, and sauntering slowly back to the Hôtel Jungfrau, I found on my arrival that my half-hour's stroll had extended from seven in the morning to three in the afternoon.

I determined the next morning to become more closely acquainted with the monster avalanches which had impressed me so much from a distance, and starting early after breakfast, I descended the pastures below the hotel, and struck upon a path leading through the pine wood which descends into the valley.

Following this down a steep slope for about ten minutes, I came upon an open space, where the stream from the Eiger glacier dashed down the valley with impetuous haste, the torn banks on either side bearing witness to the ravages wrought by the spring floods, in the numerous naked trees and huge blocks of stone with which they were strewn. Crossing the stream by a rude bridge of pine, I reached a ridge of short grass and rocks, which stretched away down the centre of the valley exactly in the direction of the spot where the largest avalanches fell. Sheltered on the north by the pine forest through which I had passed, and on the east and south by the enormous precipices of the Eiger and the Jungfrau, the heat here was intense, although surrounded and overhung by glaciers. The sun poured down its fiercest rays, and scarcely a breath of wind stirred the branches of the few pine-trees that studded the ridge.

I found here an immense number of wild strawberries of a most delicious flavour, showing how unfrequented was the spot, as they are seldom met with in the beaten tracks, except at the wayside chalets, where they may be had "for a consideration." On reaching the end of the ridge, to my great delight I found myself within two hundred yards of the precipice with which I wished to make a closer acquaintance, with a gorge of about six hundred feet in depth between me and its foot. This latter was partially filled up by the accumulated débris from the avalanches, which had become a steep slope of glacier-ice beneath, with the pounded masses of the later avalanches lying like snow upon the surface. The whole sloped steeply down about

two thousand feet, to the lowest depth of the gorge, while a rapid stream at its foot sped far downward to meet the larger streams in the Lauterbrunnen valley, two or three miles away.

I seated myself on the end of the ridge, determined to wait until an avalanche fell, regaling myself in the meanwhile with the delicious strawberries, which I devoured in unlimited quantities. I had not been seated five minutes when I heard the familiar crack in the glacier above, apparently over my head, as the precipice here rose as straight as the wall of a house, to the height of three or four thousand feet above me. There was the usual ominous silence while the mass slid down the gully, invisible from where I now was, and then the whole torrent came pouring furiously over the edge of the precipice down to the lower ledges, with a rush and roar that almost took away my breath. I was so close I could now see that the whole torrent—which at a distance looked like water—was composed of separate masses, apparently about the size of a man's head, and preserved a certain uniformity in size, except in the outer masses, which impinged in falling upon the naked rock, and were, as I have before described, pounded to a fine dust, which blew away up the valley like spray.

I never before witnessed a sight which conveyed such a notion of power as this—not even the beat of a huge wave upon the cliffs. It was such a steady, continuous, sustained power — such as Niagara must convey. It struck me as one of the most curious contrasts of my life, that I should be quietly seated on a warm grassy knoll, eating strawberries, while such magnificent forces were in operation within a stone's throw of the spot where I sat.

It is these extraordinary contrasts that constitute one of the chief charms of this wonderful country. You may be almost broiled upon a grassy slope, with a glacier of many miles in extent within half a dozen yards. You may gaze to the right upon a pastoral scene as fair as the mind of man can conceive, while on your left may be barren slopes, rugged precipices, desolate moraines, and untrodden fields of snow as bare and bleak and dead as if the breath of life had never been breathed from the Creator's lips. You may be gazing from a mountain-peak upon sunny plains below, when in an instant, almost without warning, you are enveloped in a thundercloud so dense that the world seems blotted out, and the elements the sport of malignant demons.

Never shall I forget one of the latter in the valley of Kandersteg two years ago. I had been all the morning up at that loveliest of all mountain lakes, the Eschinen See, which lies just under the slopes and precipices of the Weiss Frau. As I neared Kandersteg towards evening, a thunderstorm suddenly broke upon me, and I sought shelter under the projecting eaves of a

deserted chalet. In an instant the mountains were wrapped in vapour, which rolled in huge billows down the valley, and seemed to boil and seethe round every crag and pinnacle. Sometimes an enormous cloud would come sailing down from the further heights, pause a moment, and then, as if instinct with life, rise perpendicularly to another stratum of air, and go back again in the direction whence it came. Others would fling their vapoury arms wildly around a barren peak as if to wrest it from its eminence, and fly wrathfully away, apparently in impotent rage. All the time the thunder crashed from behind the Blümlis Alp, reverberating from precipice to precipice with an almost continuous roar; the lightning leaped from crag to crag, darted across the entire valley, or almost blinded one with a flash that seemed to touch the eyes; the rain swept in drenching torrents across the pastures, and a hundred streams leaped into life from every mountain-face; while beyond the leaden outline of the Weiss Frau, which seemed to tower above the storm, a lurid glare, as if Pandemonium had opened its fires beyond, gave a horrid lustre to a scene which one could only gaze upon with speechless wonder and awe.

By crossing a small strip of glacier below the ridge from which I observed the avalanches, and then by scaling two small ledges of rock, which may be accomplished by the aid of a short ladder, it is possible to reach a sheltered spot quite close to the ice-torrents, where they must rush past pretty much in the same way as the Rhine dashes by in a "hell of waters," as one stands on the little terrace at the foot of the falls at Schaffhausen. This has been actually accomplished, as described in "Murray," but I cannot consider it quite a safe proceeding, for although the ice-torrent confines itself principally to one channel, it is quite possible that it might on some occasion or other extend its operations over a larger area, and a block of ice as big as one's head, coming in contact with that somewhat unwieldy but useful protuberance, from a height of a thousand feet, would probably render one incapable of observing these stupendous glacial phenomena for evermore.

I lingered a long time in this wonderful valley. Its entire seclusion, the marvels of nature around, its desolation on one side and rich vegetation on the other, impressed me deeply, and I have seldom spent a more enjoyable morning than I did here. I wondered what would be the sensations of a man whose whole life had been spent in a great city, if suddenly set down in the midst of a scene like this! Shutting in the head of the valley was the vast wedge-like form of the Eiger, with its magnificent glacier stretching from base to summit, torn and rent into myriads of cleavages and contortions, which, dwarfed at this distance, gave it the appearance of fretted silver. More to my right rose the majestic

Monch, with its innumerable slopes and ledges of snow and ice; immediately above me the Jungfrau, its summit hidden by the abrupt precipice at my side; lower down the valley that enormous bastion of bare rock, which drops in a precipice of half a mile or more, straight down to the Lauterbrunnen valley. The streams tearing and foaming down from the glacier in hot haste—the pines glowing in the morning sun, their faint, sweet odour pervading the whole valley—the soft moss upon which I sat, and the pink strawberries sprinkling the ground as if with gems. To have stood but once in such a spot is a “joy for ever”—a joy to be stored up in one’s “deepest cells of memory,” and to fill one’s heart with thankfulness to God!

I walked down to Lauterbrunnen in the afternoon, and secured a room at the homely but comfortable Staubbach Hotel, where, from my bedroom, I could look upon that wondrous fall which Tennyson must have had in his mind when he wrote the “Lotus Eaters.”

“And like a downward smoke the slender stream
Along the cliff to fall, and pause, and fall did seem.”

And again—

“A land of streams! Some like a downward smoke
Slow dropping veil of thinnest lawn did go.”

The precipice over which the Staubbach falls, slightly overhangs, and is so high (nine hundred and eighty feet) that one or two neighbouring streams, which come over its crest in a considerable body of water, positively disappear before they reach the bottom. One immediately in front of my window kept up a respectable struggle for existence until about half-way down, when it gave it up as a lost case, and, like Macbeth’s witches, vanished “into the air.” Some moisture on the rocks below, however, revealed the fact that it did

reach the bottom, in a fine spray invisible to the naked eye.

I sauntered up the valley by moonlight that evening, and was again witness of a most peculiar effect, which had once or twice struck me in other parts of Switzerland. The stream was coursing rapidly down the valley, and, although I of course knew I was ascending, it suddenly appeared to me as if the water were running towards me *up-hill*, and consequently the path before me appeared *down-hill*. I had first noticed this strange illusion when journeying with a friend one very dark night in the valley of Chamouni.

We were riding in one of the mountain charrs, going at a slow walk up the somewhat steep ascent. My companion suddenly exclaimed, “Why, we’re going down-hill!” I looked ahead, and could positively have declared that his statement was correct, until I looked behind, and found that the road we had passed also appeared down-hill. Had we not known to the contrary, we could have taken an oath on the subject, it seemed so very evident.

One night I was walking up the valley to Kandersteg, in company with a German acquaintance whom I had picked up on the road. The Kander was rushing by us with impetuous haste, close to the road. Again I observed the same peculiar effect, but, not being in a talking mood, I said nothing. Suddenly my companion said, “Why, the water is running up-hill!” and stopped in utter amazement. I then informed him of the effect I had observed on the road to Chamouni. We both thought the illusion must be in some way referable to the great height of the surrounding mountains, though why it should be observed only at night, or why it should be so at all, I leave to wiser heads than mine to determine.

HALF ROUND THE WORLD IN AN OVERLADEN SHIP.

BY A MERCHANT SEAMAN.



THE following account of the homeward passage of a ship from the Pacific may just now prove interesting, as a narrative of what a sailor’s life sometimes is, and as a proof that the exertions of Mr. Plimsoll and those who are helping him to amend the laws regulating the lading of sea-going ships are not uncalled for. The

vessel in question is a new iron ship, of something under 1,000 tons burden. Her last voyage home will serve as a fair and moderate example of the dangers resulting from the suicidal policy of despatching a vessel overladen, and without her full complement of men:—

“We were laden, then, with nitrate of soda—a heavy, dead-weight cargo, explosive into the bargain—and had taken on board rather over our proper load, when we got all ready for sea, and all hands thought they were going to leave the dry, dusty, earthquake-visited coast of South America, grand withal in its towering heights and sublime barrenness, to revisit the hospitable shores of Old England. Not so, however. The captain was anxious to take home a little more of the paying cargo; and at the last moment, when we were all ready for a start, he determined to take on board an extra hundred tons! The greatest depth to which a ship ought to be loaded is to allow three inches out of the water, besides the bulwarks, to every foot depth of hold. A vessel with a hold

twenty feet deep should thus have not less than five feet of her side below the main-deck in smooth water—little enough in verity. In our case the rate was reduced to barely two inches to every foot, giving only about three feet below the main-deck out of water. In this plight we started on a voyage through one of the most tempestuous seas in the world. It was a decided case of the last feather, or the last feather but one.

"A few days previously I had seen one of the hard-worked mules, which toil up and down the mountain-sides with the loads of nitrate and coal, leaning, with his load on his back, against a rock. I thought he was resting, but his motionless position attracted my attention, and I found he was dead. He had 'struck,' his last load was too much for him, and he had died literally in harness. But our good ship could not refuse to go, and if she sank, her fate would involve the death of a score of human beings. I was, I confess, somewhat alarmed at the prospect; but she was the best ship on the coast, and I felt that if I could have left her—though a stealthy desertion was now impossible—I could not better my position, and might 'jump out of the frying-pan into the fire.' Many ships are far worse off than we were. I do not intend this as a picture of the blackest and darkest side of life in an overladen ship. I repeat we were a type of only moderate danger; as a faithful representation of such, it will leave the more frightful cases of hardship—of downright cruelty and inhumanity—of which there are but too many, to the imagination of my readers.

"The weather we encountered in the Southern Hemisphere was terrific. I really marvel how some of the old vessels can weather the Southern capes. In our case there was no buoyancy in the ship at all; instead of lifting to a sea she would 'flop' down into it, flooding the decks, and straining everything to pieces. Suppose a bolt had worked out of her bottom, we could not have stopped the leak, and she would have filled. Suppose a plate had twisted off from its fastenings, she would have gone down like a stone. After gaining a speed of five knots in moderate weather, her decks were wet fore and aft, and in a gale of wind her behaviour was scandalous. She would 'hammer away,' taking seas aboard, and washing everything movable off the deck. It was perfectly unsafe to go along her deck, even by holding on to something all the time. How much could a man pull on a rope in such a plight as this, with both hands engaged for his own safety? Sometimes, rather than incur the risk of broken limbs, or being washed overboard by a sea coming into us, we would, instead of walking along the deck, go aloft and slide down the stays and rigging, in order to pass from one end of the ship to the other; for whenever there was a moderate breeze, throughout the passage home, our decks were under water.

We made a quick passage, but at the cost of considerable damage to the ship, besides loss of cargo, occasioned by the action of the water we took in on the soluble nitrate. We were continually pumping out the dissolved soda. I have said we were short-handed; two of the crew in addition were ill, and it is a wonder that we were not all down with rheumatism. With the labouring and working of the ship, the planks of our house on deck were so strained and opened that water was continually pouring in, and for weeks I did not have a dry bed.

"Coming on a gale of wind, we found it was impossible to take sail in with one watch; and by calling all hands the men were worn out with fatigue, and unfit to stand their watch after the sail was shortened and the ship made snug.

"Three hands in a watch in a thousand-tons ship! What can be done when one of the three is at the helm and another on the look-out? One man and an officer remain. To trim sail and stand by in squalls is impossible; they must be left to take care of themselves.

"The officer of the watch often had to take the helm, and the man on the look-out for passing vessels was called down, and then there were only three to do the work, while the officer had to steer the vessel, and shout out orders from the wheel, where he was standing.

"Suppose a vessel were to pass at such a time, which it was our place to give way to, and no one on the look-out! The result would be a collision, with the loss, perhaps, of both vessels and crews. How often do we read of the unaccountable disappearance of a vessel and all hands! I believe that in nine cases out of ten these disasters are caused by sending ships to sea in such a condition that they are unable to weather such storms as they may reasonably be expected to encounter; and by the cruel policy of sailing short-handed, when the look-out is called from his post to lend a hand in working the ship, and the officer of the watch has to take the helm. Sometimes, when she has been caught 'dirty' by a sudden squall, with a press of canvas on her, I have known our ship to be left to both steer and look out for herself, while all hands—officers and men—were engaged in shortening sail. Often, I doubt not, in the case of a missing vessel, her fate may be attributed to the fact that before the few hands can make her snug or relieve her from the pressure, she has had to succumb to the violence of the blow. If the 'watch below' are called out, they are robbed of their fair share of sleep; and, under such circumstances, a safe end to the voyage means so many months of hardship, so many pangs of rheumatism, so much permanent injury to men whose lives are probably thereby shortened, for the sake of adding to the fortunes of our merchant princes. What would

England do without us? Shipowners may say, 'The more cargo my vessel brings home, the more money in my pocket; and the insurance will cover the loss of the vessel if she founders; but the insurance does nothing for the souls of the poor men who go down with her.'

"Thank God, all our great shipowners are not so unmercifully reckless; and thousands of brother tars will re-echo my hope that the criminally negligent will be made to remember the name of Plimsoll with as much dread as we shall with joy. But,

"Ye gentlemen of England, who sit at home at ease,
How little do you think upon the perils of the seas!"

"Many who send the vessels out to sea look at a small gang of riggers working *with ease at a vessel in dock*, and ship the men for a *deep-water*

voyage accordingly. Look at those men at sea, in a gale of wind; when their strength is most required, they cannot exert it to the full extent; with the vessel rolling and pitching about, and shipping heavy waves, they are obliged to hold on with one hand while they pull with the other, sometimes requiring all their strength to prevent themselves being washed overboard. A sailor's life is hard enough without having to undergo the additional hardships entailed by such circumstances as those that attended the voyage of which I have here attempted to give a slight description.

"In conclusion, I hope the day is not far distant when the competition will be for reasonably loaded vessels instead of among deep-laden, short-handed shipping."

SECOND AND THIRD HAND.



WHATEVER may have been the embarrassment of people with fixed incomes, in consequence of the recent upward tendency in the prices of almost all the necessities of life, there can be little doubt that in the case of the very poorest

of our London population—people who may be said to have no incomes at all—the trial has been still greater.

It is satisfactory to observe, however, that there is at least one item of expense in which there can have been no very great advance in their case. Any one who will take the trouble to inquire a little into the prices which the very poorest are accustomed to pay for their wearing apparel—in the selection of which, by the way, it would be altogether erroneous to suppose they are not every whit as fastidious and deliberative as those who move in circles far above them—will find it very difficult to imagine that there ever was a time when things were managed much more economically than they are at present.

The sources from which the poor usually obtain their supplies of dress are principally three, all of them having to do exclusively with second-hand clothes, or rather *old* clothes, for it is impossible for any one individual to be in a position to say through how many hands some of them may have passed. There are the old-clothes shops, there are the women who sell garments in the streets of certain poor neighbourhoods after the manner of cheap jacks, and there are the *al fresco* retail marts held in various odd corners, chiefly in the East End of London. To people whose ideas of shop-

ping have been derived from Regent Street and Bond Street, some little amusement, if not a certain degree of profit, would probably be afforded by a visit to either of these sources. As a curious sight, however, preference should be given to one of those queer gatherings such as may be seen any fine morning on a little triangular plot of ground at the Whitechapel end of Commercial Street. There are often some forty or fifty dealers to be found here, mostly women. Their mode of business is very simple. They go with a microscopical amount of capital to Petticoat Lane, buy the largest bundle their funds will permit, wash, iron, or mend them, and then bring them to this little corner and spread them out in public, seating themselves on little stools beside their stocks, and often improving the time with needle and cotton, or it may be occasionally solacing the cares of commercial life by placidly puffing at little black pipes.

Among the various heaps customers stroll singly, or more frequently in pairs—as ladies are wont to prefer when they go shopping—examining materials, discussing colours, and inquiring prices with as much gravity and leisurely deliberation as folks with a good balance at their bankers' examine the shop windows in Oxford Street or Piccadilly. Many of the articles displayed are altogether incomprehensible to the bachelor intellect. They are more or less white, and it may be stated in general terms that, so far as it is possible to ascertain, the prices of them appear to range from three-farthings to about eightpence. The skirt of a dress, which the purchaser and her friend agree in predicting will last through the summer, realises sevenpence-halfpenny. A pair of stays fetches fourpence, a pair of stockings a penny.

There is a very curious article of dress designated,

unless the saleswoman was misunderstood, a "lining body," an ingenious contrivance for connecting two sleeves by a kind of framework of glazed lining. The sleeves were of black velvet profusely adorned by a yellowish braid. It was introduced at fourpence, but was ultimately reduced to twopence-halfpenny, the purchaser expressing an opinion that it would do to wear with a "cross-over."

A cotton dress, "without a crack in it," fetches eightpence. An elegant velvet body, with an overpowering profusion of lace, fringe, and glass beads, goes for one and fourpence. Now put this magnificent structure with the sevenpenny skirt, and it gives one and elevenpence for a stylish dress. Add to this—to be sure of erring on the liberal side—one and fourpence for articles of under-clothing, and it appears that for four shillings a lady in the precincts of Whitechapel or Brick Lane may present to the world a very effective *tout ensemble*. If there ever was a period when it could

be done for much less, they must have been "good old times" indeed.

This amount certainly will not include articles *de luxe*, such as jewellery, though a very trifling additional sum will go a great way even in this line. A pair of massive gold ear-rings of superior design may be had for a shilling. They run, indeed, as low as fourpence-halfpenny, but at this price they are mere trumpery, and probably no lady who could afford a one-and-fourpenny velvet jacket would condescend to wear such decorations. There is a splendid diamond set in massive gold, and forming a most imposing-looking brooch, price fivepence; rather a smaller brooch and ear-rings to match, a shilling the set. There are rubies and emeralds, sapphires and jaspers, pearls and opals, corals and carbuncles, and it would appear that for about half-a-crown, judiciously invested, a lady who had arrayed herself in a four-shilling outfit might glitter in all the gems of the Arabian Nights, and all about as real.

HESTER MORLEY'S PROMISE.

BY HESBA STRETTON,

AUTHOR OF "THE DOCTOR'S DILEMMA," ETC. ETC.

CHAPTER THE FOURTEENTH.

COMING HOME.

"ARE you ill?" asked Hester, in soothing tones. "You must not lie here in the rain. If you tell me where your home is, I will take you there under my umbrella."

To walk through the wet streets with a friendless and poverty-stricken stranger on her arm, would be a vast triumph over Miss Waldron in her carriage, with Carl by her side.

The woman shuddered, and shrank from the light touch of Hester's hand, crouching lower and lower upon the ground. She had looked up from under the veil at Hester's face, upon which the lamp still lit in the entrance of the chapel was shining. Then she gave utterance to a sob, a suppressed cry, a moan wrung from the extreme anguish of a suffering spirit. She stretched out her hand towards Hester, but did not touch her, in a mute gesture which awoke within her a vague alarm.

"Speak to me," cried Hester: "are you ill? What can I do for you?"

As she spoke the last light was extinguished in the chapel, and the outer doors were closed and fastened by some person within. The noise seemed to arouse the stranger. She rose to her feet, but staggered, and fell back against one of the large square pillars of the portico.

The continued silence and the agitation of this

woman gave a shape to Hester's vague suspicions. A quick terror and chill ran through her frame. The darkness which now gathered about them was a welcome veil, a screen behind which might be acted scenes that must shun the day. The rain also, and the emptiness of the street, seemed to draw closer the curtain which ought to conceal the wretched creature at her side.

"Tell me only who you are," she whispered in a tone of mingled pity and terror.

"Hester!" moaned the shadow, which she could scarcely distinguish in the dense darkness of the night; and there was no need for any other word to pass through the faltering lips.

Hester sank down upon the steps, and with blank, streaming eyes, gazed into the blackness which hemmed them in. The poor lost Rose had come back at last! The sinful woman whom she had urged Robert Waldron to seek out, and whose mysterious disappearance had been a continued care to her. Her father's wife stood beside her! She felt her cheeks burn and her veins tingle. Now she had a vision of her sin which she had never had before. In a few minutes her woman's heart—a heart which had known womanhood but for a little time—cried out in strong condemnation of the sinner, as well as the sin. She felt that she could not forgive her all at once, nor speak to her any words except those of a righteous anger and abhorrence. She knew now that she ought not to

have married her father at all, unless she had felt for him such a love as would have lifted her up for ever out of reach of the temptation by which she had fallen.

Yet, thought Hester, after the first paroxysm was over, had not God brought them together thus, on the very threshold of his own house of prayer, to teach her that if he did not cast her out, neither ought she, who might herself be tempted, and who was not without sin? She bowed her head upon her hands, and a passionate prayer went up from

"No," said Hester, "he has not forgiven you. He never mentions your name."

"Oh, my God!" wailed the lost woman; "but I must get his forgiveness before I die. What is to become of me? I want to hide somewhere, anywhere out of Robert's reach. He is trying to find me; and I vowed to Heaven when I left him that I would never, never look upon his face again. Do you know why? God keep you ever from a repentance like mine. Shelter me somewhere, little Hetty—hide me. You promised once that you



"SHE STOOD BEHIND HIM."

her burdened heart for help and wisdom in this hour of extreme need.

"What am I to do with you?" she asked, speaking at last to the silent and motionless figure at her side—standing there like a voiceless ghost from some other world, which could utter no word until a question was put to it.

"Oh, Hester!" she cried, "I could live no longer without seeing you and my home. You cannot think what it is to be away ten years, and never hear a word, not a syllable, of those who belong to you. Would my husband forgive me, do you think? Only so far as to let me hear him say so before I die? I cannot live very long! Is he less angry with me? Does he ever speak of me?"

would be always like my own daughter to me. Hester, you could not turn away from your mother, however sinful she had been."

The doleful words were wailed into Hester's ear, as she still gazed with streaming eyeballs into the darkness. Rose had crept towards her, and stolen her arms round her waist. She did not push away the clinging arms, but she could not answer.

"I am very young still," murmured Rose; "no older than Miss Waldron, who was at chapel just now. I thought your father would be there, and I should see how changed he was. I am going to die, Hester. Yesterday the doctor in London said there was no hope for me; so I resolved to come back home, to you and my husband. He is a just

man and a merciful man. He cannot help but forgive me before I die. I believe that Jesus has pardoned all my sins."

In the voice of Rose, which was one to be remembered for a lifetime, there was a tone of hope as she spoke the last sentence, and she pressed her arms more closely about Hester.

"Yes," she said, "I was very wretched, and I thought, when I did not see your father to-night, had I not better go back to London, and end my life quickly as women like me do. But then the preacher spoke, and a strange, strange peace entered into me. He looked towards me, when I sat behind you, Hetty, and he said, 'Our souls have no sins which the charity of Christ cannot cover.' Then I resolved to trust myself to the charity of Christ, and to yours, little Hetty."

Her voice was lost in sobs, long-drawn and painful, and her head sank upon Hester's lap.

Hester's hand fell softly, with its cold touch, upon the fevered forehead.

"If Christ will receive you," she said, with a thrill of awe as she looked up into the dark sky, as though she half expected to see a light from heaven breaking through the black clouds, "who am I that I should cast you off? I will give you shelter for this night at least."

Yet she did not move, nor help Rose to rise, but let her still lie there sobbing, with her face, which no eye could have seen, hidden in her lap, as if she would fain hide it even from the night. Hester was thinking of Robert Waldron, in his luxurious home, repenting with a comfortable penitence, which left him free for many pleasures, and which was scarcely more than a welcome gloom, where he could withdraw when the brightness of his life wearied him.

But this wretched misery, this poverty-stricken, ill-clad, friendless, dying misery, was the true result of the sin of which both had been alike guilty.

She shuddered, and Rose felt it; for she loosed her clinging arms, and would have fallen lower at her feet, had not Hester's hand pressed her head down gently upon its resting-place, as a mother's hand will caress the bowed head of a sorrowful child.

She had forgotten the cold and the rain, or felt them only as fitting better this dreary hour than light and cloudless skies would have done. But now her hand fell upon the wet clothes of the woman whom she had promised to shelter, a woman upon whom the doom of death had been passed.

She lifted Rose up very tenderly, and drew her trembling arm through her own. No eye saw them. Not one of their curious people met them in the deserted streets. In the darkness and dreariness of a winter's night, Rose Morley returned to her husband's house.

CHAPTER THE FIFTEENTH.

A WEARY NIGHT.

THERE was on the left hand of the house door an empty room which was rarely entered, and Hester left Rose there until her father and the young girl whom she kept as her only servant should be gone to bed. It was already near the hour when John Morley retired to his own chamber, where he sometimes read or wrote until later on in the night. Hester took off her wet cloak, and went into the room where he was sitting alone. There was a newly quickened love mingled with a dread of him stirring in her heart. The grey, despairing face and the silvery hair of her father touched her to the quick this evening. She stood behind him for a minute or two, and then laid her hand, which had so lately rested upon Rose's forehead, upon the snow-white head. It was the very attitude and caress of Rose herself on that day, now many years ago, which had never died out of John Morley's memory; and he laid his head down upon the desk before him, with a sigh of profound regret and despair.

"Father," cried Hester earnestly, and kneeling down beside him, "is there nothing that can make you happy? Is there nothing that could happen to bring you comfort?"

John Morley shook his head in silence.

"But this is horrible," she said. "Surely, surely God never meant you to pass your life in a grief like this! Surely he has kept some consolation in his hands for you!"

"All things are possible with him," he answered; "but yet holier men than I have passed through long lives under blacker clouds than mine. There was Cowper. God has not smitten me with an Egyptian gloom like his. For me there is a hope in the world to come, where the weary are at rest."

"But is there no hope for you sooner?" asked Hester. "Is there nothing which would make you glad?"

"Nothing," he replied. "I have a habit of sorrow now, Hester, and I cannot shake it off. It is a poisoned garment, if you will, but to tear it off would tear my living flesh. No, no! There is no more gladness for me in life."

Could she tell to him her heavy secret? An unutterable terror seized upon her at the very thought. She remembered the moment when her father, with the glare of madness and suicide in his eyes, had awakened her from the profound sleep of childhood, telling her it was better to die than to live. She recollected the stealthy, murderous blow which had nearly killed Robert Waldron. Her heart failed her. Overhead was that closed room, which had been a constant testimony against Rose; and now Hester involuntarily held her breath and listened as if she heard some sound there. John Morley listened also; but there was nothing to be heard,

as there never had been since Rose had fled. He sighed wearily, and turned over the leaves of the book without reading them. The striking of the house clock seemed welcome to him; and he bade Hester good night, and left her alone in the gloomy room.

Hester waited until she heard him lock his chamber door, and then she fetched Rose to the warmth of the fire still burning in the grate. In the dark room Rose had not realised that she was indeed once more in her husband's house. But this was his hearth. Here was his chair standing where it had been used to stand in her days of innocence, gone for ever. There was his open book, with the leaves still fluttering as if they felt the movement of his fingers. This was the light he had been reading by, and the air he had breathed. It was her husband's hearth, and she had been a curse to it. She was come back to it in secret and with trembling. She felt now how impossible it would be to face him, to look into his eyes, and to hear his voice. She glanced about her for some refuge to hide herself in—herself, a scared, abject, frightened wretch who ought to steal away into some hole to die alone and unscen. Her wild despairing gaze round her husband's room met the sweet, grave, compassionate eyes of Hester.

"Sit here, poor mother," she said, drawing nearer the fire her own mother's chair, which in the last days Rose had always given up for her little step-daughter. She sank down upon it, her lips moving without a sound, and her white face turned towards Hester. Hester had not seen it before. It was the same face as that of the gay young girl she had once been, but that face disfigured and marred and aged by shame. The soft lines were hardened, and the brightness had grown dim, and the freshness had become sullied and tarnished. Hester could not bear to look at it; and as she moved to and fro, ministering to her sore necessities, she did so with averted and downcast eyes.

The hours of the night wore away very slowly. Sometimes Rose fell into a feverish slumber, broken with sobs and starts. She would not go to bed, and Hester did not urge it. What she was to do with her, Hester did not know; and while she watched her uneasy rest, she tried to shape out some plan for her future life. To seek any home for her in Little Aston would be madness, as every one would know her and the story of her shame. To send her away, whom she had so earnestly and so long sought to find, seemed impossible, ten times impossible, if, as she said, there was no hope of her life. It would be practicable enough to keep her in her father's house, for John Morley's automatic habits could be counted upon to a moment. There were rooms in his house which he had never entered within her memory, and which he would never think of visiting. The cost of her maintenance

there would be less than anywhere else, and money was very scarce with them. But she recoiled from the idea of suffering her to dwell by stealth and unforgiven in her husband's house, to sleep under the same roof. Hester recalled her father's melancholy cry, "She will never sleep under my roof again." Moreover, now she guessed somewhat more clearly the heinousness of Rose's guilt. She could not keep her, unknown to her father, in the shelter of his dishonoured home.

From time to time Rose woke up and murmured little scraps of her sad history. She had taken no special care to conceal the traces of her flight, yet it had happened so that she had left Falaise and wandered into a remote country district, where she had lived cheaply, as one can do in France, for some years upon the money which was in her possession. When it was gone she had entered into a situation as lady's maid, and so returned with the family to England, three years ago. She had always passed as a widow. Her last situation she had given up only two months before; and since then she had been living in poor and solitary lodgings in London, with no society but the memory of the past; which had grown day by day into stronger force, until it had driven her back to Little Aston in the forlorn hope of casting herself upon her husband's forgiveness. Hester shook her head sadly at these last words. There was no chance whatever that John Morley would forgive her.

"You do not yet know what you have done," she said, with unconscious severity. "If you could see him you would know better what he has to forgive. He may forgive you before you die. But I dare not tell him that you are here; I dare not mention your name to him."

"But it is so many years ago!" cried Rose, clasping her thin hands together.

"Many years ago!" echoed Hester; "no; it has been every day of those ten years. The grief has been new every morning. Ah! I understand it better now. Every day he has felt himself deserted and betrayed. Oh, my father! my poor father!"

She covered her face with her hands, as if she could no longer endure the sight of her who had wrought her father's misery. But a slight sound caused her to look up. Rose was wrapping round her the shabby cloak, still damp and soiled from the rain of the evening. Her wan face was flushed, and her eyes, burning with inward fever, had lost their former distress.

"I am going away," she said, "and I will not come back till I crawl here dying. I must see him again and hear him say he forgives me; and if he sees me dying at his feet he will say it. But I will go away for a little while, Hetty."

"But where will you go?" asked Hester.

"Oh, I don't know," she cried, wringing her hands. "Why does God let women as wretched

and lonely as me live? I could never put an end to myself, for I'm afraid to die. And now I shall go away, and it will come creeping on and on, and I shall know it is there, and there will not be a voice to speak gently to me. Oh, little Hetty, cannot you help me?"

"Yes," answered Hester, taking her bonnet and cloak from her feeble hands; "I will help you. If my father even heard you had been ill, in misery and solitude, it would only add to his pain. You must stay somewhere near to me, poor mother, so that I can nurse you and comfort you. Think of God rather than of my father. You have separated yourself from him, but you have not separated yourself for ever from God. You belong to Him still."

In tones as soft and soothing as those a mother uses to a suffering child, Hester spoke these words to Rose. She placed the poor forlorn creature in her mother's chair again, and smoothed gently the locks of light hair, now thin and grey, which had fallen in disorder over her face. Rose slumbered again fitfully, crying out in her dreams for her husband's forgiveness. Once or twice Hester started with terror, thinking she heard his step upon the stairs; but the dreary night wore away without surprise. As soon as the late dawn began to glimmer upon the uncurtained window, she awoke Rose and took her up-stairs to her own room, where she would be safe from all eyes.

CHAPTER THE SIXTEENTH.

THE OLD NURSERY.

It was as Hester drew up the window-blind in her own room, and her eye fell upon the melancholy-looking outbuilding opposite it, that a practicable plan for the shelter of Rose presented itself to her. The old nursery, which at some remote date in the past had perhaps been the scene of childish sports and laughter, would be a refuge well fitted for her safety and concealment. Still she resolved within herself to ask her father's consent, though her habitual independence of action might very well have acquitted her conscience from the necessity of seeking it. She wished to feel that she had his sanction. She thought that at some future season it would prove a consolation to him to know that he had himself given a refuge and shelter to Rose.

At breakfast, with lowered eyelids and a voice which betrayed her intense anxiety, she made her request to John Morley.

"I met a poor woman last night at chapel," she said, "a stranger in the town, without friends. She has been a lady's maid for some years, but she is now in great destitution. She thinks of getting her living by needle-work, but she can scarcely do more than earn bread by that. I wish we could help her, father."

"It is very little that we can do," he said mournfully.

"Yes, we can do a great deal," she answered; "what she dreads most is associating with drunken and ignorant poor people. I don't think poverty is so bad in itself, but it is bad when you are compelled to live among low people. I don't mind being poor in the least while we are together, father."

"What can we do for her then, Hester?" asked John Morley.

"There is the old nursery in the yard," she said, with a feeling of desperate resolve, "it is only filled with rubbish now, but there is a good grate in it, and the roof is whole. If a few panes were put into the window, and I found some old furniture for it, it would be quite a home for the poor creature. We might even ask a small rent for it, if you thought that was best."

"Hester!" ejaculated her father in a tone of stern reproach.

"Then I may do it," she answered eagerly; "oh! you will never repent it, dear father. You do not know what good may come of it. She will never come into your way, poor thing! You will never see her, I am sure, for she is afraid of being seen. She has been very unhappy in her marriage, and she is afraid of ever meeting her husband again. No, you will never see her."

Hester was speaking to herself rather than to him, in a manner which might well have excited his suspicions. But John Morley saw nothing of her agitation; he was plunged into more personal and more perplexing contemplations.

"Hester," he said, "I am in sore need of money. We must raise near upon two hundred pounds before the beginning of next week. I have some heavy bills to meet."

For some years past John Morley's method of conducting his business had been by drawing bills, which always came due long before he had the money to meet them. Hester had been very early initiated into these anxieties.

"How can we do it?" she asked, with some natural disquietude at the mention of a sum so large.

"There is but one way that I can see," he answered; "we must mortgage the house. Yet it is the only property I could leave to you if I died; and it came to me with your mother. Everything has gone wrong with me since I lost her. I would not do anything with it without your consent, Hester."

"Don't think of me, father," she said, "and don't trouble about me. If that is the only thing we can do, let us do it at once. Who would lend us the money upon the house?"

"I don't know," he replied, with a helpless shake of the head.

"Father," she continued, with a beating heart, "I know who would do it, and it might be kept a secret, so that all the town may not talk about it. Will you let me tell the person I am thinking of?"

"Who is it?" he asked in a low voice.

"Mr. Waldron," answered Hester.

"Mr. Waldron!" he repeated; "I could not receive any favour from him. It would be like taking money for my—Oh, Hester! life is very hard."

She understood his half-uttered sentence perfectly, and her heart ached for him, and the broken-spirited, desolate woman hidden away from his sight.

"It would be no favour," she said earnestly; "we should pay the interest of the money, or he should have the house. You should not see him yourself, but I will in your place. You could write to him, you know, and I will take your letter, and explain everything to him. He would not think he was doing you any favour; I will take care of that. Then nobody would know except ourselves and him."

"I cannot make out how the business has fallen away so much," sighed John Morley.

Any one seeing his melancholy and abstracted face, and hearing the mournful tones of his voice, would very easily have understood why customers were few and their visits brief in John Morley's shop. No one chooses to do his shopping where he meets with a face and voice adapted to a house of mourning. Hester understood it better than her father, but she could not make it plain to him. She knew, too, that he tacitly agreed to her plan, and she said no more about it. For the rest of the day she was busy over the more pressing duty of getting Rose's refuge ready before night-fall. When it was over she lit a fire in the grate so long empty and cold. The nursery looked but a poor place after all her care. The walls were discoloured and stained, and the rafters of the sloping roof were black with age. There was a little bed in one corner, with the softest mattress and pillows off Hester's own bedstead. Two chairs stood one on each side of the narrow fireplace, with a small round table between them. It all looked bare, dingy, and forlorn. In the solitude of her long lonely hours the occupant of this room would have time for repentance; but there seemed no place for atonement and reparation. What could she do in this poor refuge and hiding-place? In the dusk of the evening Hester led her step-mother to the only home she could provide for her. Rose stood motionless in the centre of the little room, looking about it with searching and troubled eyes.

"It is the best I can do," said Hester anxiously; "we are very poor."

"Poor!" echoed Rose.

She said no more, and her face grew paler and more troubled: but afterwards there rested upon

her worn features an expression of solemnity amounting almost to dignity, such as had never been seen upon them in her bright girlish days.

"God bless you, Hetty," she cried; "you are better than a daughter to me. This is the place where I am to die, seeing you to the last, and your father—he cannot be relentless, when you are so good. Oh! my darling, my darling! you are like an angel from heaven to me."

She flung herself on her knees and threw her arms around Hester, with tears of profound anguish, and sobs such as might be wrung from tortured lips.

When Hester quitted the old nursery, Rose waited for some minutes without stirring, in the attitude of one who listens eagerly. Then very cautiously she stole to the door and opened it a little way to look out into the yard. The house opposite seemed to tower above her very high and very black in the darkness, with one window lighted up in the highest storey of the gable to the right, and another on the ground floor of the gable to the left. She knew their meaning well. Lawson was still at work in his attic, and her husband was sitting in his old place with his books about him. She could remember him so well: the thick brown hair just catching a tinge of silver, and the studious, handsome face, which had been wont to brighten with a smile as sudden as a flash of lightning when he met her eye—a rare smile, reserved exclusively for her. She wondered to herself whether he had ever smiled so upon his daughter. Since she had seen Hester she had felt a little more comforted about her husband, and a little less remorseful. He had not been so deserted or so lonely as she had pictured to herself. He had watched his child growing up at his side. There came a pang, an unreasonable pang, amounting almost to jealousy, at the thought that he had grown forgetful of her and her sin in the companionship of Hester. In the brief space of her married life she had fostered a profound jealousy of Hester's mother. And now, as she looked down into the yard towards the lighted window behind which he was sitting, an unconquerable longing seized her to steal down the crazy staircase, and in amongst the blackened stems of the lilacs and the dwarfed laburnums, to look once more upon her husband, whose love she had bartered for the boyish passion of Robert Waldron.

She listened again, but there was no movement, no sign of life in the yard below. On the other side of the house lay the street and the town and the busy world of which she had taken her last farewell. For to venture out into these streets, and to show her familiar face among the townspeople, would be to banish herself for ever from the home where she had come to die. Was she positively come to die here? Was she never more to sleep on any other bed but this until she fell into the last awful un-

broken sleep? Were these walls and this narrow court the only spot of the wide world on which her eyes were ever to look again? She stretched out her arms and raised her bent figure to its fullest height. She felt no pain, nothing but the feebleness, often worse than pain, which is the result of long mental suffering. The London physician had perhaps been deceived by her symptoms, which, possibly, she had exaggerated to him. She might live many years yet. But to live—what was that? To die was dreadful; but she could not choose to live. She tried to send back her thoughts to the time when she fancied she had loved another better than her husband, but it was in vain. The thought of John Morley was there quick and poignant in her inmost soul; but Robert Waldron was forgotten. She must see her husband.

Still she lingered and listened, watching the

gleam through the uncurtained window, and the black naked boughs of the trees standing out clearly against its feeble light. She turned back and looked at her own faded face in a small glass which hung against the wall, over a little toilet-table. If her husband could only see it and read in it the story of her bitter repentance, would he not forgive her? But how much would his forgiveness mean? Was it possible that he could be reconciled to her?—that he could receive her again?—call her his wife, and restore her to her forfeited place? No, no; that could never be. He might look upon her again, and pardon her if she was in the hour of death. But if life was strong within her, and many years lay before her, would he not spurn her from him, and refuse to lay his finger to her burden of shame?

END OF CHAPTER THE SIXTEENTH.

CURIOUS CUSTOMERS.



ALTHOUGH we are accustomed to hear complaints, in this jostling struggling world of ours, of weaker persons who go to the wall, it is not to be denied that if they cry out pretty loudly they will receive an immediate share of public attention, and if found to be much or unduly squeezed, we are justified by precedent in assuming that sympathy and assistance will also be given them. Very many classes of society, when found to be suffering under the burden and heavy pressure of a yoke to which they once voluntarily submitted themselves, have been relieved by the charitable interference of public opinion. These are generally found to be suffering from the infliction of too much work for too little money, which we call a grievance of condition; but there are other grievances, which for distinction's sake we will call grievances of the feelings, suffered by those whose calling brings them into constant and actual contact with the public, which require for their alleviation not the active interference, but only the attention and consideration of society.

Some time since there appeared in one of our comic periodicals a sketch entitled "A Tragedy at the Counter," in which the mechanical habit that shopmen have of saying "Sir!" after the customer has stated his requirements, was criticised. Such a rebuke from such a quarter attracted our attention towards shopmen in general, and having always cultivated a desire to hear both sides of a question, we prosecuted inquiries among them to a considerable extent, ascertaining their feelings and opinions,

and wherever we found intelligence, encouraging loquacity. And the result is the discovery that the public have it undoubtedly in their power to render the duties of shopmen less laborious and irksome.

One would naturally suppose that every person who enters a shop is aware of what he requires. Our experience, however, shows that shopkeepers and shopmen are accustomed to recognise two classes of customers, those who know what they want, and those who do not. In the first is to be found that customer who is so rare and so perfect, that we will call him the Ideal customer. He exists as a sort of fond dream in the mind of the shopman, sometimes, but all too seldom, realised. He knows what he wants, and he knows the price; he asks for it, pays for it, and takes it away. Heaven prosper him on his way! He is a model to all customers.

Now if the shopkeeper did not possess the article required by the Ideal customer, he would inform him so, and the customer would leave the shop. In this respect, and in this only, he differs from the Obstinate customer, who, although quite as clear on his requirements, gives far more trouble. For he is no sooner informed that the article he wishes is not kept, than he betrays a belief that it is, and that only laziness or lack of understanding prevents his obtaining it. He therefore institutes a little search on his own account throughout the shop, naturally inflicting annoyance on the feelings of the shopman.

We will suppose the Obstinate customer enters a chemist's shop, and asks for a pair of washing-gloves. He is told that "we do not keep them."

"Don't keep them?" he exclaims, gazing keenly around the shop; "dear me, that's very awkward!

What is that pile of things on the shelf just above your head there?"

He is told that they are chest-protectors.

"Oh, indeed! Chest-protectors, eh? they wouldn't do then—they wouldn't—do." This is said slowly as the speaker's eye wanders searchingly around the shop. Presently he says again, probably pointing rudely and officiously with his umbrella.

"Isn't that pile of things there with the red borders to them washing-gloves? I think they must be!"

They are accordingly taken down, and shown to be something quite different to washing-gloves. A glimmer of intelligence will then perhaps shine upon him, and he will say, "Well, if you haven't got them I can't have them—can I?" And then casting suspicious glances around him, he leaves the shop slowly, and the shopman may think himself fortunate if something in the window does not attract his notice, and bring him back again.

A customer much to be avoided is the Indiscreet customer. He orders readily, and speedily finds what he wants. But he never thinks about price, and generally never inquires until his parcel of goods is packed up. It most frequently happens that the price is three or four times what he expected or can afford, and an awkward dilemma is the result. It generally ends in the parcel being opened, and goods extracted until the amount is reduced to within the reach of the Indiscreet customer's pocket.

This customer is the more annoying, as the mode of dealing with him is so difficult. If it be attempted to discern the probable worth of the individual by his dress and appearance, there is the utmost danger of confounding him with the Unknown customer, who is at once the horror and delight of shopkeepers. We will narrate a fact we came across to illustrate this.

A shabby old gentleman walked into a jeweller's shop, and asked to be allowed to look at some topazes. Three or four were accordingly shown to him, and he quickly selected the best, which he said was hardly good enough. "Ah, but you see these stones are expensive," said the jeweller, rather patronisingly. "I can assure you the one you have chosen would answer any ordinary purpose."

The old gentleman looked around him in a dissatisfied way, and presently caught sight of a large and beautiful stone in a corner of the jeweller's glass case.

"That looks more like what I want," said he; "let me look at that one, will you?"

"It will be very expensive, sir; very indeed—more, I dare say, than you would like to give. The stone you have is very good, sir."

In a quiet voice, the old gentleman asked if the stone was for sale or only on view. At this rebuke the jeweller produced it, naming a high price. It

was immediately chosen; and his customer, taking a sketch from his pocket, said—

"Get that coat-of-arms engraved upon it, and send me word when it's done."

He gave his name and address. He was a noble earl; and the shopkeeper had committed the grievous error of treating him as an Indiscreet, when he was an Unknown customer.

One of the most remarkable specimens is the Communicative customer. This person, it appears, will, with the slightest encouragement (and sometimes without), converse freely about his personal and private affairs over a shop-counter, to an individual he has never seen before in his life. A gentleman of this class, on the simple introduction occasioned by the purchase of half a pound of figs, told the grocer's assistant that he should have been in the grocery trade himself if he had stopped down in the country, where he was born; but that he always had a fancy to come to London; so he ran away, and came.

"I wasn't worth much when I first arrived," said the Communicative customer; "but I'm worth a few thousands now. I bought a house yesterday, that cost me over fifteen hundred pounds; and I'm going to furnish it, and let it furnished. I never could get on with unfurnished houses. One of my tenants," etc. etc. etc.

Another instance was a man who, within five minutes of entering the shop, informed the shopman where he was going to dine, what he was going to have, and what his balance was at his bankers'!

Of course, the most troublesome of all customers are to be found amongst those who do not know what they want. Foremost among these, we are informed, are ladies. The difficulty these fair creatures have in making up their mind, is only equalled by the difficulty the shopman experiences in making it up for them. They are impressed with the idea that the task of buying must be performed slowly; and if an article is found speedily, that is *prima facie* evidence that it is not suitable. The experience of a shopman in a fancy shop was interesting on this point.

If a lady and her husband are about to purchase, the lady of course performs the selection.

"That's pretty, dear—isn't it?" she will say.

"Yes, very. Suppose you have that?"

The fair one shrinks from the conclusion. She searches further. Presently she exclaims again—

"There! I think I really like that the best of any!"

Her husband observes, not unreasonably—

"Well, then, my dear, you'd better have that one."

And we are assured that the lady will then invariably put it on one side, and look over the others again.

Foreigners bear a very bad character. As the object of the Barnacles and Stiltstalkings was always "how *not* to do it," so the aim of a foreigner when he enters a shop would appear to be *not* to obtain what he requires. He demands an article. It is shown him. He then wants it with or without some particular attribute. This is produced, and he finds some other qualification necessary, and so on.

Such a man will enter a stationer's shop, and say, "'Ave you such note-paper, what is very lean?" Apprehending that he wants very thin paper for foreign correspondence, the shopman shows him some. He looks at it thoughtfully, and says, "'Ave you also blue?" Blue paper is shown; and the foreign customer is alarmed at the prospect of getting exactly what he wants. But presently a happy thought strikes him, and he says, "'Ave you wiz line?" If that is also found, he wishes it "as large so that," measuring with his fingers; until at last, having by patience and perseverance succeeded in *not* getting what he wants, he raises his hat politely, and leaves the shop.

We regret to say that it is customary, in some shops, to get rid of foreigners as soon as possible.

All experience shows that the shopman should avoid being particular as to the manner or mode of speaking in customers. We have most of us met with people who annoyed us by a peculiarity of some sort in manner or conversation. This, no doubt, arises from a little fastidiousness on our part; yet we do occasionally allow our feelings a little liberty in this respect. But it is an exceedingly ill-advised thing for a shopman to do, especially

(as is most often the case) with habitual customers. We met with an amiable bookseller, who suffered intense annoyance from a young man who frequently came into his shop, and, commencing at the door to speak in the highest falsetto, would end when he arrived at the counter in the deepest bass.

"Right down in his boots!" said our informant angrily; and although we pointed out that it was but a trivial fault, for which the young man was not perhaps altogether responsible, the bookseller declared he should be unable much longer to restrain his indignation!

A young man behind a counter complained of a customer who annoyed him by saying, "Err—yes—um!" in a nasal tone, at every available opportunity in conversation. The shopman always carefully constructed his sentences so as to avoid, if possible, the exclamation, and, failing this, he adopted the plan of serving him in dead silence.

We could speak of the Harmonic customer, who whistles or hums a tune the whole of the time he is in the shop, when not speaking, and who converses in an abrupt, short manner, in order to give himself more time for melody; of the Indistinct customer, who twice asks for "Orlypobbleggletokens," and, in despair, is at last told that he may perhaps get them a little lower down on the same side of the way; of the Precise customer, who will not have his parcel sealed with wax, because the wax gets under his finger-nail when he opens it; and of many, many more. But for want of space we must stop, content if we have reminded the public that if everybody is entitled to consideration from the shopman, the shopman may look for a little consideration from everybody.

LITTLE WOMAN.



RUNNING out to meet me gladly,
Little woman;
Or with sweet and sunny face bent
Smiling on me from the casement,
Little woman.
Could I ever meet it sadly,
Ever cease to love her madly?—
Love that matcheth hers but badly—
Little woman.

Cosy all her modest dwelling,
Little woman;
Fires ever brightly glowing,
Flowers ever freshly blowing,
Little woman;
And a placid smile still telling
Of a gentle bosom swelling
With a peace all peace excelling,
Little woman.

Just to hear her tender greeting!
Little woman;
Never word unkindly spoiling
Home for husband sad or toiling,
Little woman.
Just to feel her warm lips meeting,
Just to hear her fond heart beating,
It was worth a year's entreating,
Little woman.

Men may grumble at their Lares,
Little woman,
And, on women's rights loud railing,
Wreak the women's wrongs prevailing,
Little woman;
But the best of household fairies,
Is the wife whose golden hair is
Drooping o'er her husband's chair—his
Little woman.

THEO. GIFT.



"FICKLE ALICE"

See "ALICE" — p 245



THE GIFT OF FLOWERS.



TO CHARM THE SICK-ROOM'S WEARY HOURS."

WHEN wearied to the heartstrings, faint and white,
I lie as on a rack of cruel heat,
Ah! you could weave all colours from the light,
And make for me my sick-room very sweet,

If you would only bring green leaves and flowers,
Sweet, dreamy flowers from green-house or from mead,
And large ripe leaves, as cool and fresh as showers;
Ah! these would make the moments light indeed.

I love all lovely things—all flowers therefore ;
 But not all for their beauty ; oftener far
 Some sweet association makes me care for
 A blossom, with that love one bears a star.

For flowers have the savour of old kisses,
 The vision and the thrill of vanished hands.
 You say you do not understand me. This is
 One of the things love only understands.

Yet trust me, scarce a stalk of any there,
 Within the liquid of that crystal vase,
 But is upheld by a hand of air,
 A lucid hand no eye but mine can trace.

You see this rose, but do not see the shining
 Long hair of little Dyce, which makes me love it ;
 Hair—like a frailest cloud of golden lining ;
 Rose—like the star of evening just above it.

You see these wall-flowers, but you cannot see
 The lips that kissed them, and the hands that
 gave ;
 Nor why these pansies are so sad to me
 But under them I see my mother's grave !

Then send me any flowers of any favour,
 Grown under glass, plucked wild in fragrant
 lands ;
 They all have got a memory and a savour
 Of kisses, and a thrill of vanished hands.

Two gifts to charm the sick-room's weary hours,
 God gives ; through all men one, one loves to
 keep
 For his own giving : that, the gift of flowers ;
 And this, God's gift to his beloved, sleep !

W. CANTON.

OUR PRESENT NATIONAL EXPENDITURE.

BY HENRY FAWCETT.

IN TWO PARTS.—PART THE FIRST.



IN the April part of this Magazine, in which the subject of local taxation was discussed, I mentioned the reasons that induced me to refer to local taxation before considering imperial taxation. Fully admitting that imperial finance is in a much more satisfactory condition in this country than local finance, yet there are so many questions of great importance connected with the present excessive national expenditure of this and other countries, that it may be advisable to make some remarks on this subject.

Nothing would be more erroneous than to conclude that, because we happen just at the present time to have a prosperous revenue, the subject of imperial taxation has lost much of the interest and importance it formerly possessed. It is, in the first place, impossible for any one to foresee how long this prosperity will continue. Although by no means desirous to take a gloomy view of the future, yet the most hopeful must admit that many events are now happening which may in the future seriously impede industrial progress.

The relations between capital and labour were never before in so unsatisfactory a condition. Industrial prosperity cannot be regarded as permanently secured unless capital and labour work harmoniously together. But instead of this harmony there is at the present time a fierce industrial war being waged from one end of the kingdom to the other. It is now each day recorded that some important trade is paralysed by the outbreak of bitter disputes between employer and employed. These

contests are waged with a power of organisation and with a settled determination that were never known before. It seems scarcely possible peacefully to adjust any question concerning wages. If trade is prosperous and wages have to be raised, a strike or lock-out is just as likely to ensue as when trade is declining and wages have to be reduced. Confidence between employers and employed appears to be gradually vanishing. There has lately been in the iron and coal trade of South Wales one of the most formidable strikes that have ever taken place. Not less than 150,000 men were on strike, and the ostensible cause of the disagreement was that the workmen absolutely refused to believe the assertions that their masters made in reference to the position of their business.

Various plans are from time to time proposed to remedy this unfortunate state of things: Many were inclined to place great faith in the establishment of courts of arbitration. It is now found, however, that such a remedy is but a feeble palliative ; for a proposal to settle the dispute by arbitration has been again and again rejected with increasing scorn. As these disputes extend, their effects will produce a more marked influence upon the whole community. The consequences resulting from the loss inflicted upon employers and employed, by the suspension of business, are not simply to be estimated by the amount deducted from the profits of the one and from the wages of the other. It is easy to show that a strike may create many mischievous influences, which will continue in operation long after the particular dispute has been settled.

It is, for instance, well known that of the aggregate capital annually accumulated in this country, only a portion is retained to be invested in our own industry. The whole capital which is accumulated is in fact divided into two streams; one stream flows into countless foreign investments, the other stream is retained to supply the wages, the plant, and the material of our own trade. The relative magnitude of these streams is determined by the advantages which home and foreign investments respectively offer. If the profits of English capitalists continue to be diminished as they now are by the constant recurrence of trade disputes, it is only too certain that more capital will be sent abroad, and less will be retained for our own industry. But the average remuneration of the labourer is primarily determined by the amount of capital devoted to industry, and, therefore, any circumstance which tends unduly to diminish profits will in its after-consequences inevitably lessen wages. It is altogether erroneous to suppose that it is possible to obtain a compensation for the loss which a strike entails, by artificially increasing the price of a commodity.

If commodities are made dear by a strike, then it is obvious that the loss is simply transferred to the consumers of the commodity. Those, however, who are engaged in the trade cannot thus permanently shift the loss from themselves to others. Wages in each branch of industry are ultimately regulated by the general competition of the labour market, and it must be also borne in mind that the demand for a commodity varies with its price, and consequently, if the price is artificially raised, trade will become less active, a smaller amount of labour will be required, and wages will decline.

In all those branches of industry in which we have to contend with foreign competition, an attempt to force up prices above their natural level will be attended with much more serious consequences. Both the foreign and the home consumer will cease to purchase our commodities if they can buy them cheaper elsewhere, and thus an industry may be altogether destroyed if the price of the commodity is forced above its natural level.

It will probably be said that strikes have not hitherto in this country been accompanied with the consequences here indicated. It will, however, be scarcely denied that if these disputes between employers and employed extend during the next few years with the same rapidity as they have for some time past, our description of the mischief which will be done and of the loss which will be inflicted on the entire country is in no way exaggerated. It must be remembered that, with regard to this particular subject, we are here chiefly concerned with its future influence. I have in fact

been led to refer to the present relations between capital and labour chiefly with the object of suggesting some caution and some warning to those who seem to think that the continuance of material prosperity is inevitable, and that no perils threaten it in the future. There seems every reason to suppose that trade disputes will increase both in number and intensity. Every indication seems to point to the conclusion that, if strikes are to be prevented, the conditions upon which industry is carried on will have to be fundamentally changed. Our present industrial system is based upon the principle that the capital and labour which are requisite for the production of wealth are supplied by two distinct classes, between whom there are often no other relations than those between the buyer and seller of a commodity. If the seller of merchandise cannot obtain for it an adequate price, he can take it back again to the warehouse or storeroom. No expedients have ever been devised for enabling the buyer and seller at once to come to terms. If the buyer thinks that the price demanded of him is excessive, or if the seller thinks the price offered to him unduly low, the bargaining is suspended, and the commodity is for a time withdrawn from the market. Just in the same way does it happen that the bargain involved in the buying and selling of labour often cannot be arranged, and when this is the case labour is withdrawn from the market, and there is a strike or a lock-out. It therefore becomes evident that these disputes between employer and employed will continue as long as the relations between them are simply those which exist between the buyers and sellers of merchandise.

The industrial conflict which is now being waged will have to continue some time longer, and will inflict still greater injury upon the community, before people recognise the necessity of seeking the true remedy in replacing the present antagonism by a community of interest between employers and employed. Such a community of interest will exist when it becomes practicable generally to carry on industry upon co-partnership or co-operative principles. But although I have always been an earnest advocate of the principles of co-partnership and co-operation, believing that to their general adoption we can look with most confidence for human improvement, yet it appears to me to be certain that a considerable time must elapse before the general body of the workmen of this or any other country obtain the training requisite to engage successfully in co-partnership and co-operative schemes.

This interval, during which our industrial relations may be undergoing the change here indicated, will probably be a period marked by such a frequency of trade disputes, that it is more than likely a very unfavourable influence may be exerted on

the trade and revenue of the country. Our financial condition may also be very materially affected by the increasing costliness of coal, which is sure to occur, as the most productive and most easily-worked seams are gradually exhausted.

The present extremely high price of coal is, no doubt, partly due to trade disputes, which are more frequent in coal-mining than in any other branch of industry.

But even if these disputes had not occurred, the increased demand for coal would inevitably lead to a very considerable advance in price. The laws which regulate the price of mineral produce are the same as those which regulate the price of agricultural produce. If the margin of cultivation descends, or in other words, if it becomes necessary to resort to less productive soils in order to meet an increased demand for agricultural produce, it follows that the price of agricultural produce must rise in order to render the cultivation of these poorer soils remunerative. In the same way it happens that if an increased demand for coal renders it necessary to sink mines deeper, and to work more expensive seams, the price of coal must advance so that a compensation may be provided for this greater cost of production. Hitherto we have had cheaper coal than any other country, and to this circumstance our commercial prosperity has been to a great extent due. America has, probably, the most extensive and the most productive coal-fields in the world. These coal-fields have only just begun to be worked. America, at the present time, can afford to send us coal nearly at the same price at which we can produce it for ourselves. This fact should convince us that in the future many impediments may oppose our industrial progress, which we have not had to contend with in the past. Some years ago, when a rise in the price of coal

was only a possible contingency, Mr. Mill warned us that such an event might occur, and used it as an argument in favour of making a greater effort to lessen our national debt.

I am induced to lay so much stress upon various circumstances affecting the continuance of industrial progress, because if we accustom ourselves to believe that progress is inevitable, and that the commercial prosperity of the past few years is certain to continue, we shall be the more likely to neglect paying due attention to the serious considerations involved in our present enormous national expenditure.

It is well known how difficult, in the case of an individual, is a reduction of annual expenditure; and what is true with regard to an individual is equally true with regard to a nation.

We have in our own country, at the present time, many striking examples of the extent to which a spirit of extravagance is fostered by a large expenditure.

Although many persons, who are ardent friends of economy in the abstract, urge strong objections against the present expenditure of more than £70,000,000, yet when we come to examine into the practical schemes which they advocate, it is not unfrequently found that if their schemes were carried out, expenditure would greatly increase, instead of being diminished. For instance, proposals meeting with much popular support are frequently made to throw local charges upon the Consolidated Fund.

It would be easy to prove that the result of carrying out such schemes would be to promote extravagant expenditure, and consequently to necessitate the raising of a larger revenue by taxation.

END OF PART THE FIRST

UNLUCKY COMPLIMENTS.

DO not agree with those cultivators of grumpiness who denounce all compliments, classing them under the head of flattery. It would be a dingy world if we never said civil things to one another. If I can honestly praise a friend's work, or his conduct, why should I not do so?

If he tells me he liked my last literary effort, I feel encouraged, and applaud his taste; if he informs me that I am looking well, I conclude that certain symptoms which had raised disquieting suspicions were all nervous fancy; if he tells me that he often regrets seeing so little of me, I truly believe that he thinks so at the time. I do not seek to tickle others

with false phrases; why should I suspect them of being less sincere?

I am speaking, of course, of the words of the mouth, not the conventionalities of the pen. For I own that I am *not* the humble servant of all the correspondents to whom I profess obedience; and when I present my compliments in writing I mean nothing at all, or at any rate am in perfect ignorance as to what my meaning is.

By-the-by, I have known very young men who, in answering a first invitation, have presented their *compliments* to the lady who proposed herself their hostess.

And why not? If it is a dance, their legs are required, and legs are compliments; so are ears,

and tongues, and stomachs. Really the substitution of an "e" for an "i" makes the phrase sense, which it was not before.

But a genuine compliment, with a good foundation of truth, and expressed neatly and aptly, is a moral bon-bon, and wholesome enough in moderation, though of course excess in all sweets is cloying.

It is not everybody, however, who knows how to manufacture the article, or how to administer it. If you are any way deficient in tact, or given at all to blunder, you had better let compliments alone altogether, or you may possibly sting the object of your good-will, instead of tickling him as intended, as the Marquis of Seneterre stung Poinset.

The marquis, who was blind, went to hear the opera of "Enelinde," which caused a *furor* at Paris in the reign of Louis the Fifteenth, and being very much pleased, asked his attendant who wrote it.

"Monsieur Poinset," was the reply.

"I should like to speak to him," said the marquis.

So afterwards, in the crush-room, Monsieur Poinset was introduced to the blind nobleman, who embraced him with effusion, and said, "My dear sir, accept my warmest thanks for the pleasure you have afforded me. Your opera is full of beauty, the music is delicious. Oh, what a misfortune that you had to set it to such trashy words!"

Now, unfortunately, it was the libretto, and not the music, of which poor Monsieur Poinset was the author.

Louis the Fourteenth, who, like many humbler rhymsters, somewhat overrated his poetical powers, showed a copy of verses to Boileau, and asked his candid opinion of them.

"Ah, sire," said the poet, "I am more convinced

than ever that nothing is impossible to your Majesty: you desired to write some poor rhymes, and you have succeeded in making them positively detestable!"

But perhaps there was a spice of malice in this reply; though if so, Boileau played with edged tools with a vengeance.

The worst blunder in what was intended for a pretty speech that I ever heard of, however, was perpetrated in modern times by a dignitary of the Church, who was asked to marry a young couple in a country place where he happened to be staying, and was also called upon to propose the health of the bride and bridegroom at the subsequent breakfast.

Now the host and hostess were noted in the country round as the most genial and the happiest couple that had ever gone hand-in-hand through life; so the good divine thought he might as well turn this to account in his speech.

"To sum up all our good wishes for the happy pair whom we have seen united this morning," he said in conclusion, "we cannot, I am sure, do better than express a desire that the result of their union may prove strictly analogous to that of the parents of the fair bride."

Whereupon the "fair bride" went into hysterics; the bridegroom's eyes flashed daggers; the bridesmaids coloured and looked down; the master of the house blew his nose violently. He who had caused all this commotion wisely sat down and held his peace, wondering at the effect of his innocent compliment to the host and hostess.

He soon, however, found some one to enlighten him.

"She is not their daughter at all," his informant explained, "but a niece who came to live with them when her own father and mother were divorced!"

LEWIS HUGH.

ALICE.



H, Alice, blue-eyed Alice,
What is this ill thou dost me?
Hath heart of thine such malice,
Or art too weak to trust me?
Is it wantonness that leaves me,
Or scorn that careless grieves me,
Or what of thee bereaves me,
Fickle Alice?

It was sweet summer, Alice,
When we knelt in the bracken,
With sky for fairy palace;
And cords that may not slacken,

The bonds of love, were fastened
Around my heart; but hastened
By thee comes winter chastened:
Aid me, Alice!

Oh, bitter feasting, Alice,
Thou makest me, thy lover
Love brimmed me up a chalice
Till all its store ran over;
But all the wine is wasted,
And the dregs are bitter-tasted,
And the reckoning thou hast hasted,
Cruel Alice!

B. MONTGOMERIE RANKING.

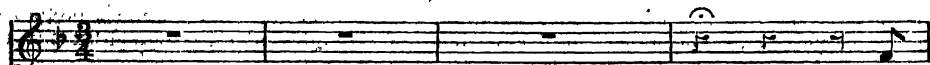
The Little Lane.

A MAY SONG.

Words from "Cassell's Magazine."

Music by JAMES L. MOLLOY.

VOICE.

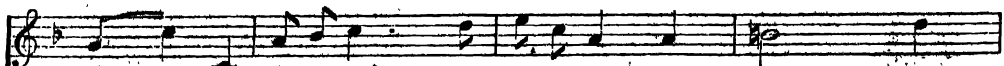


1. If
2. To

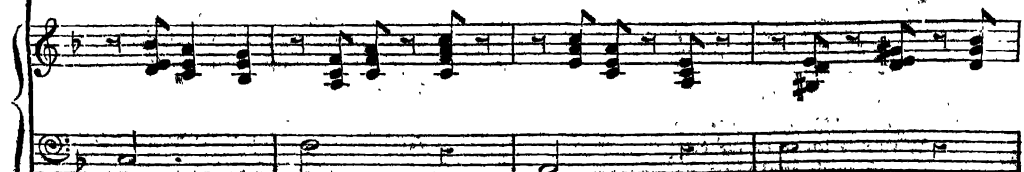
PIANO.



I could see that lit - tle lane, That lit - tle lane such miles a -
feel a - gain once young and true, I would give all my fu - ture



- - way,.... If I could walk there once a-gain, Now it is
life;.... But tell me, dear, - art thou too sad For that lost



May, If I could walk there once a - gain, Now it is
year? Art thou too sad for that lost year? It is May

This system features a vocal melody in the upper staff and piano accompaniment in the lower staves. The key signature has one flat (B-flat), and the time signature is 4/4. The lyrics are written below the vocal line.

May, Ah! how my heart would beat for you, And how my fool - ish
now; The lit - tle lane with ro - ses hung, The lit - tle lane such

The second system continues the melody and accompaniment. The lyrics are written below the vocal line.

tears would fall! Ah! how my heart would beat for you, And how my tears would
miles a - way, As when we both were true and young, Blooms fair, blooms fair to -

This system includes the instruction "rall." above the vocal line and "rall." below the piano accompaniment. The lyrics are written below the vocal line.

fall!
- - day.

pp

The final system concludes the piece. It includes the instruction "pp" (pianissimo) below the piano accompaniment. The lyrics are written below the vocal line.

HESTER MORLEY'S PROMISE.

BY HESBA STRETTON,

AUTHOR OF "THE DOCTOR'S DILEMMA," ETC. ETC.

CHAPTER THE SEVENTEENTH.

FRIENDS IN NEED.

AT last Rose hurried down the steps and into the dreary little garden. She crept stealthily towards the window, lest she should enter into the revealing light, and her husband should lift up his eyes and see her standing without in the chill of the wintry night. Her face, wan, faded, and withered, approached cautiously the uncurtained panes. The room—she had seen that last night, with its ten years of added dinginess and decay. But who was this aged man, with a head bowed and white with years, who was bending over her husband's desk, and turning, from time to time, anxiously to the great account-books she had hated years ago? Her husband could not be yet fifty years old, a man in the full vigour and strength of life. The lamp beside him was covered with a shade which cast a gloom over the rest of the room, while it threw a full light upon him. The thin, shrivelled hands, the rounded shoulders, the grey and hollow features, the white hair—Rose saw them as in a dream. He got up at last, pushing away his books, and took his stand upon the hearth, with his back to the fire, and his full face turned towards her. She drew back with a creeping thrill of terror. "Hester," she heard him say, "I have finished my letter to Mr. Waldron. But if it were not for your sake, I would sooner let things take their course than ask him to lend me money. Ay, I would sooner die!"

Rose waited to hear no more. She cast one terrified glance at her husband, and then she fled back in a panic of fear to her hiding-place.

"Oh! what have I done?" she cried in a frightened whisper, speaking as if some one was near enough to hear her. "He was a good man and a prosperous man! I did not know what I should do. God forgive me! He never will; but God, in his great mercy, forgive me!"

She counted no more upon her husband's forgiveness. What there was in his face she did not know, but it had cast out all hope from her heart. For the first time, looking into the deep gulf of her husband's wrongs, she knew that it must be for ever fixed between her and him. Perhaps in the last hour he might lay his hand in hers, and let her feel its warm forgiving clasp, as she went down into the dark valley of separation; but only in that supreme moment of death. Life, if she lived, must be a perpetual banishment from his presence.

The next morning, Hester, with her father's letter in her hand, wended her way slowly across the park to Aston Court. She felt a natural reluctance to

the merest chance of meeting Robert Waldron, towards whom her feelings had undergone a great revulsion. Until now he had claimed from her an undefined and rather pleasant pity, mingled with admiration. If Carl had not come into her narrow world, her sentiment for Robert would have bordered upon a girl's first love for a seeming hero; and her heart, free and tender, might have centred in him its interests, and possibly its affections. But with Rose at home, with this dark sad shadow at her side, she recoiled for the first time from the idea of seeing him again. To her infinite relief she just caught a glimpse of him leaving the park on horseback by another route. Mr. Waldron then would be alone, and she could ask him not to let his son know of the transaction. She quickened her steps, and took the nearest way to the room where he was generally to be found in the morning.

It led past the window of the breakfast-room, where Hester saw a vision of Miss Waldron sitting near the fire, and Carl in close conversation with her. She nodded gaily to Carl, whose face was turned towards the window, and hurried on. Mr. Waldron was at that moment walking along the farthest end of the terrace, and Hester started to run after him. The colour which this exercise brought to her pale cheeks gave her the beauty she lacked; and as Mr. Waldron turned sharply round, he acknowledged to himself that Robert's love had sufficient excuse. To Hester's extreme astonishment he drew her into his arms, and imprinted a solemn kiss upon her glowing face.

"My dear," he said, drawing her hand upon his arm, and covering it with his own, "I was just thinking of you. You are often in my thoughts, Hester—how often you would be surprised to know."

No opening could be more propitious. In a few incoherent sentences Hester stammered out the purpose of her visit, as she walked down the terrace leaning upon his arm. He opened the folding doors of his room, and led her into it, seating her in a chair close to his own, and regarding with delight her downcast face, and her long eyelashes now beaded with tears. Nothing could have pleased him more; no overture could have come more opportunely. At the very moment when he was planning some mode of approach to John Morley, he had himself sent Hester to ask his help.

"Hester," he said, "your father has given me the greatest pleasure I have known for a long while. I am right glad he did not go to anybody else. What? are we not brothers? Have we not been members of the same church these thirty years? He has

acted like a Christian in coming to me. I will return at once with you to your home. This is the right thing. I find great pleasure in this."

"I was very much afraid of coming," said Hester, with a sigh of relief, and raising her eyes to his with a smile that enchanted him. His daughter-in-law promised fair to become his idol.

at once. Come, let us go to your father, and set this business to rights. But as for a mortgage on his house, that is all nonsense."

"We must not go to him," said Hester earnestly; "and he will never consent to take any money from you except upon a mortgage, for which he will pay interest. I know my father, and he will



"ROBERT WALDRON RECOGNISED ANNIE."

"Afraid of me!" he repeated, his austere face beaming with pleasure; "whatever could make the poor child afraid of me? Am I so very terrible to you, Hester?"

"Oh, no!" she said; "but you are the greatest man I ever have to speak to; and I don't know anybody else who would have been bold enough to come to you as I have."

"Bold!" cried Mr. Waldron; "she calls herself bold! And asks simply for two hundred pounds! I wish it was two thousand, and you should have it

not listen to any other proposal. He will put his affairs into some lawyer's hands immediately."

"But what then does he want me to do?" asked Mr. Waldron, disappointed.

"He has written to you," she answered, "and given a fair statement of his debts. What I want is to ask you to advance any sum of money you think will bring us through our difficulties; though I am sure I don't see how they can end."

She spoke very dejectedly, and Mr. Waldron longed to tell her what a brilliant lot lay at her feet

for her acceptance. But he dared not do it yet. He opened John Morley's letter, and read it carefully, seeing from it far more clearly than the writer how complicated his embarrassments were.

He determined to avail himself of this new confidence established between him and Hester, in order to advance the happiness of his son.

"I must deliberate over this," he said, "and I shall want you to come up again several times, I dare say. You may take the money home with you at once; but still there will be papers to draw up, and I should like to know more about your affairs, as far as your father chooses to confide them to me. You will not dislike coming several times?"

"Oh! I shall like it," she said frankly; "I would spare my father any trouble I could bear for him."

There was a fond and truthful devotion in Hester's manner, which penetrated to Mr. Waldron's heart; and a treacherous doubt crossed it as to whether his daughter was really as devoted to him.

"And you are very poor, Hester?" he said.

"Very poor," she answered gravely.

"You would like to be rich?" he asked.

"Dearly," she answered; "I should like to be as rich as you are, Mr. Waldron. I like a house as large and grand as this, and I think I could spend my money like any lady in the land."

"Like any other lady," he corrected.

"No," she said, "I am no lady. I belong quite to the working classes."

If she belonged to the working classes, Mr. Waldron wished that all the other ladies of his acquaintance, including his daughter, did the same.

When the interview came to an end, he insisted upon taking her to see Miss Waldron, and himself conducted her to the breakfast-room, where she still was, though she was alone, Carl having taken his departure. Hester was not sorry to see Miss Waldron, as a new interest centred in her, now that she had to regard her as Carl's possible future wife. She was received with a distant condescension intended to keep her in her place, which Miss Waldron was afraid of her forgetting, since she had been invited to dinner at Aston Court. More than this, there was rankling in her mind a suspicion, almost amounting to conviction, about Robert's meetings with her in Madame Lawson's garret, in spite of that old lady's denials. Her father also seemed disposed to make too much of John Morley's daughter. It was one of the greatest disadvantages of their denomination that social distinctions were apt to be overlooked among the members of a church. Both Mr. Waldron and Hester seemed to ignore them; and it was high time to set her down a little. At the bottom of all lay a terrible doubt of Carl, who did not go on exactly as she wished, and who had never once set her heart beating by calling her Sophia.

"I am very much occupied with a bazaar," she

said, after a freezing salutation, "and I have no doubt you can assist me in the plainer work. I will give you some to take home with you."

"I am afraid I shall have no time," answered Hester; "though, indeed, I thought of asking you if you could not find me some sewing to do at home. I mean for payment. I shall want a little money soon, and I cannot ask my father for any."

Her thoughts were running on the fresh burden she had added to the charge of their household expenditure. Rose would have all her time unoccupied; and Hester knew well how pacifying it is to a woman's spirit to have woman's work in her fingers. Besides, so far as her strength would permit, it would be only right for Rose to do something towards earning her own living. Hester had grown up in the practical school of poverty; so she asked Miss Waldron for work, and the payment for it, quite naturally, and with no over-weening sentimental emotion.

"I intend to ask Mrs. Grant as well," she continued; "but I am afraid she will not have much to give me, as she has all her wedding clothes still unworn. But perhaps she will know of somebody else. I shall want a constant supply," she added reflectively, "and it will be beautifully done."

To Miss Waldron an acknowledgment and request like these were a confession of immeasurable inferiority. She almost wondered to see Hester comfortably seated in her presence; and she cast a cold supercilious eye upon her dress, which was plain and worn, but, in some manner, in perfect keeping with the sweet face of the wearer. She answered in a tone of stiff patronage, which marked the vast distance between them.

"I will see what I can do to assist you, Hester Morley," she said; "I have no doubt this is sent for your good, to humble you and prove you. I trust you are profiting by this discipline."

"I hope I am," she replied simply. "I should be very miserable indeed if I did not believe that God sent all my troubles to do me good in the end. As to being poor, I dare not murmur at that, for Christ was poorer than I am."

Miss Waldron held her peace for a moment, and felt disquieted. If poverty were no inferiority, what advantage had she over Hester?

"You are only a child yet," she said, after a brief pause; "you are but a babe in spiritual things, and must still be fed with milk."

"Do you consider poverty milk for babes?" asked Hester, with a smile.

"I cannot jest upon solemn subjects," answered Miss Waldron sternly; "but I will see what I can do to assist you, and I will send you a parcel by one of the servants to-morrow. You must excuse me now, for I am very busily engaged."

Thus dismissed, Hester took her leave. Miss Waldron felt happier and more reassured. She

had not quite known the extent of John Morley's poverty; but now it had assumed a magnitude sufficient to form an insurmountable barrier between Carl and Hester. Very few young pastors, without private means, could afford the luxury of a portionless wife. But it was quite necessary to make Hester feel her position, for there had been a freedom in her manner which, more than ever, grated upon Miss Waldron's dignity now. She retired to her dressing-room, and ordered her maid to bring out the summer dresses which she had cast off, with sundry other articles no longer suitable for her own wear. The selection she made was not such as to excite the silent resentment and envy of her attendant. They would convey, she thought, a valuable lesson to Hester. To do her justice, she was not in the least aware of the full measure of her impertinence; for to her Hester was still only a young girl, and the daughter of one of their tradespeople, who had solicited her for work. But she was quite willing to humble her and bring down her pride. Having completed her selection, she ordered her maid to make them up into a parcel, and convey them to Miss Morley the next time the carriage drove into Little Aston.

CHAPTER THE EIGHTEENTH.

MISS WALDRON'S AID.

UNFORTUNATELY for Miss Waldron, it happened that when the Aston Court coachman handed her parcel out to Hester's little servant, who carried it up-stairs to her small sitting-room, Annie Grant was there, eagerly discussing with Hester how she could find some suitable work for her. They opened Miss Waldron's packet at once, and regarded its contents with astonished and incredulous eyes. Instead of the sewing they expected, they found, first, an old brown terry-velvet bonnet, of a fashion which had prevailed several years before; below that a soiled and tumbled dress of some thin material, and a white muslin pelerine that had been a good deal mended. In addition to this munificent gift there were several scraps of ribbons, some very large old collars, an odd flower or two, and a pair of black silk mittens. A note accompanied them, expressing Miss Waldron's hope that Hester Morley would find these articles useful to her.

Annie Grant possessed sufficient penetration, and had seen enough of Miss Waldron, not to accord to her quite as unhesitating an admiration as the general public of Little Aston. She was of a quick, fiery disposition, and not at all disposed to submit tamely, either for herself or others, to the insolence or assumption of any one. When she saw the tears start to Hester's eyes, and her lips tremble with words she could not speak, her own indignation broke out.

"Never!" she exclaimed; "I never saw or

heard or dreamed of such a thing in my whole life! What does the woman mean? How dare she do such a thing? Hester, what is the meaning of it?"

"I asked her for some sewing," said Hester, her lips quivering still, "and she has sent me this."

"Oh!" cried Annie, "I only wish she had brought them herself. I wonder how she could venture to do such a thing! But she counted upon you never telling anybody else—upon no one hearing of it."

"I never should," said Hester.

"I am glad I was here," continued Annie; "very glad! I only wish her father and brother knew! Marry Carl, indeed! No, not if she had ten times her money: the mean, insolent, purse-proud creature! Hester, you shall give them to me. It would only aggravate you to keep them in your sight. Let your girl carry them up to our house at once."

"Don't you think we had better keep it a secret?" asked Hester.

"Keep it a secret!" responded Annie; "I could not keep it. James will know, and Carl. I should like him to hear what his grand friend has done. I shall take them away with me; they don't belong to you, for I suppose you won't keep them as a gift. Just look at them, Hester."

She turned over the things strewed upon the table, with gestures and exclamations of indignant excitement. The insult rankled in her mind the more for Hester's outward composure. She wished to hear her speak with some of her own vehement resentment; but she was quiet, wounded to the quick perhaps, but so silent that Annie could not rouse her to utter any words of reproach.

Very shortly Annie went home, followed by the servant bearing Miss Waldron's parcel. She was burning for some opportunity of making manifest her anger to the author of it, and she possessed too little worldly prudence to conceal it upon any ground of expediency. Carl was not at home, nor her husband. She carried the parcel into her own room, and contemplated the contents afresh. An excellent thought struck her, and she immediately resolved to put it into execution.

Without a moment's pause for consideration, Annie arrayed herself in the cast-off finery which Miss Waldron had selected for conveying a useful lesson to Hester. She put on the shabby and crumpled dress, too short for her, and in consequence much too short for Hester, who was taller than either of them. Over that she threw the yellow and darned muslin tippet, with one of the largest collars, which reached to the tip of her shoulders; and she fastened to it the scraps of old ribbon and the odd flowers. Upon her head she placed the long poked bonnet, which almost concealed her face; and then she drew upon her hands the lace mittens. A more singular apparition than her own reflection in her glass had never met her

eyes, and she burst into an uncontrollable fit of laughter at the sight of it. The distance between their own house and the park-gates was but short, and she was about to make a call upon Miss Waldron. If either Mr. Waldron or Robert should happen to be present, she would say nothing, and leave Miss Waldron to explain as she could the remarkable figure she presented; but if she should be alone—why, then—

Annie sped along quickly towards Aston Court, escaping all observation till she came to the park-gates. Once within them she considered herself safe, and she could walk more quietly. What should she say to Miss Waldron if she found her alone? Annie did not feel as if she should be at any loss for words; but then what would be the end of it? Very likely Miss Waldron for her own sake would keep the secret, but there could never be any cordiality or friendliness between them again. Not that she shrank from this mode of revenge in the least. She could not help laughing out aloud as she imagined Miss Waldron's consternation and chagrin, upon recognising her valuable gift to Hester coming up to view again in so unexpected a manner. Would it not be best to say nothing at all, and leave her dress silently to rebuke and confound the impertinence of the giver? It was possible that it would be the most effectual and the most pardonable mode of reproof.

Her mind was busily discussing the subject, when she saw, not very far off, her husband and Robert Waldron coming to meet her. There was neither time nor a way for retreat. Grant, catching sight of a singular person coming towards him with a figure and carriage-like his wife's, arrested his progress for a moment, with an exclamation of doubt and surprise. Robert Waldron, whose sight was longer than his, recognised Annie perfectly.

"It is Mrs. Grant," he said, quickening his steps.

"But what is the matter with her?" asked Grant; "she does not look like herself."

She was so unlike herself that, as she came nearer, Robert could scarcely restrain the ejaculation of surprise which rose to his lips. Grant did not attempt to restrain his.

"Annie!" he exclaimed, "is it really you? Where are you going to? What in the world has happened to you?"

"I am going to call upon Miss Waldron," she answered with an hysterical laugh. For an instant a wild doubt crossed her husband's mind as to whether she had not lost possession of her reason; and he looked steadily into her excited face.

"Annie," he said, "what is the matter?"

This simple question was put by him so gravely, that Annie was more and more hysterically affected. He drew her arm into his own, and led the way towards the lodge.

"We had better go in there," he said to Robert;

"we can get water for her there, and the lodge-keeper will leave us her room for a few minutes."

Before long, Annie had recovered her composure, and sat, feeling very much subdued, on the settle in the lodge, while her husband and Robert Waldron waited for her complete recovery. She was crying now, but a word might send her off into laughter again; and she wiped away her tears, and drank little sips of water from the glass her husband held to her lips. Robert could not determine to go while the mystery of her conduct remained unsolved; for his eye recognised some of the shabby finery she wore as having once belonged to his sister, and he felt that he must learn the meaning of it.

"I was going to see Miss Waldron," repeated Annie at last, as soon as she could command her voice.

"But in these rags!" said Grant; "my dear Annie, do control yourself, and satisfy me that you are in a sound mind."

Annie hesitated, and looked towards Robert, but he would not go away.

"These rags," he said, adopting Grant's word, "once belonged to my sister, I am sure; and there is some mystery attaching to them. Dear Mrs. Grant, I beg of you to let me hear the explanation."

"You will never believe me," cried Annie, all her indignation reviving; "but she positively sent these old things this morning as a gift to—guess who to?"

"Not to you," said Grant, with an unpleasant smile.

"No, not to me, but to Hester Morley," she answered.

"Hester Morley!" echoed Grant, while Robert's face grew dark as he waited for Annie's answer.

"I was there when they came," she said, "with a note from Miss Waldron, hoping Hester could make use of them. Just look at them. Look at this bonnet."

She took it off her head and held it at arm's length, laughing and catching her breath in sobs at the same moment. Robert snatched it from her, and stamped it out of all shape under his foot.

"Hester!" he said; "good heavens! I can scarcely believe what you say. Why, Hester is to be my wife, if I can win her by any means; and you tell me these things were sent to her by my sister!"

"Your wife?" exclaimed Annie.

"Yes," he answered, curbing a little his passion; "I have loved Hester ever since Grant here carried me into John Morley's house; or, at any rate, ever since I first saw her there. Does it surprise you? It ought not. My father feels no surprise."

"Does he know?" asked Grant in a voice of concern.

"Yes, and consents to it—is anxious for it," said

Robert. "Why! what is there strange about it? You know her, both of you; what is there to surprise you in the fact that I love her?"

"Oh, nothing!" they both answered in one breath: and then all three were silent, none of them looking at the others. Annie was quite calm now, and ready to submit to any of her husband's directions. He said, gravely, she must give up her intended visit to Miss Waldron, and that she could wait where she was while he fetched her own hat and cloak.

Robert stayed behind with her, but Annie did not enter into conversation with him; and he felt embarrassed by her silence. Very few words passed between them before Grant's return, but he shook hands heartily with her before she left.

"I like you, and I thank you very much for what you have intended to do," he said, and he turned his steps homewards; while Grant accompanied Annie back safely to her own house.

Carl listened in silence to the story of Annie's escapade, but it touched and made to vibrate painfully many chords in his nature. His friend Miss Waldron had been gradually losing some of the brightness of the halo with which she had crowned herself, but this impertinence towards Hester appeared to show him the shallowness of her heart. Those who demand little homage for themselves, require the whole world to acknowledge the superiority of those they love. He was too deeply wounded by her conduct to speak of it, even to his sister, but he could ask a question about Hester.

"Are they so very poor, then?" he said.

"So poor," answered Annie, "that she asked Miss Waldron and me if we could give her any work to do."

"Yet Hester has just taken in a poor woman," observed Grant, "and fitted up a little out-building at the back of the house for her. She asked me to go to see her yesterday. A poor creature! I found her almost frightened to death by some London fellow, who told her that her lungs were almost gone. I don't believe it. I dare say it is she who wants the sewing, for she must live."

"But why should not Hester tell us so?" asked Annie.

"There is some mystery about it," he replied: "the woman has evidently been well educated. I asked her age particularly, and she said she was thirty-four. She seemed oppressed by a peculiar kind of fear which I could not account for. I have my suspicions."

"What are they?" asked Carl, looking up eagerly.

Grant leaned over the table towards him, and lowered his voice to a whisper which would have been inaudible to the keenest ear outside the room.

"That this woman is no other than John Morley's lost wife," he said. "Mark you, it is no more than a suspicion, and it must be sacred with us; but if it be so——"

"Then God bless and help Hester!" cried Carl, rising suddenly, and making his escape to his study.

The conjecture just thrown out by Grant, which had struck his mind with the force of truth, moved Carl's heart to its depths. The thought of Hester very poor, and asking for work from Miss Waldron and Annie, had been enough in itself to awaken the most chivalrous sympathies of his nature; but if Grant's suspicions were true, what a story hung upon it! He pictured to himself John Morley, lost and buried in gloom, with his dreary house peopled by memories which were half a shame and half a sorrow; and this pale, lost shadow haunting, unknown to him, the home of her happier days, but separated from him, not by walls merely, but by an impassable abyss, which she dared not attempt to cross. And going from one to the other was Hester, speaking with the same tone, and looking with the same tender eye upon each of them. If he had but the right to share her secret! If he could only strengthen and uphold her when her spirit failed her along the strait and difficult path!

Underneath all these thoughts which stirred him, there was a disguised and subtle undercurrent of emotion. If Hester had found, and received to a shelter near herself, the lost Rose, would it be possible for her ever to become Robert Waldron's wife?

END OF CHAPTER THE EIGHTEENTH.

OUR BECK.



HERE it possible, if but for a single day, to roll back the curtain of time and see this England of ours as it was a hundred years since, how it would help us to realise those "good old days" we are so fond of talking about, and in which some of us wish it had been our lot to live!

For in this utilitarian age when everything is brought to the test of pounds, shillings, and pence, and every acre not capable of cultivation is looked upon as mere waste to the community, it is pleasant to linger awhile over the departing beauties of our land, and endeavour, from what remains to us of a fast-vanishing fauna and flora, once more to build up the grand natural features of the country as they existed in those olden days. Little, unfortu-

nately, is now left by which we may correctly estimate the appearance of the country at this distant period, and in another generation probably even that will be lost; yet still there linger on in out-of-the-way nooks and corners of old England, often where we should least expect to find them, spots of natural beauty recalling the memory of its mighty forest lands, its wild breezy commons, miles of rolling wold and down, purple with heath or yellow with golden gorse; its level marsh and muirland, half land, half water; its reedy fens, the home of myriads of wild fowl and still wilder men; its storm-beaten capes and headlands, the summer haunts and breeding stations of countless sea-fowl, now, most happily, saved from certain extermination by the passing of the Sea Fowl Protection Act.

We must not, however, forget the object of this paper, which is simply to describe the characteristic scenery of an insignificant stream, provincially termed a "beck," in one of the Eastern counties, presenting indeed little to interest an ordinary observer, along whose course, however, there still linger traces of bygone times, and which even now is beautiful after the fashion of those olden days.

Some miles inland, skirting the north-eastern seaboard of our county, there rise a low range of limestone hills, known as the "Wolds," and in a wooded cleft deeply indenting the green curve of the wold, and breaking its uniformity, our little streamlet first rises to the light. Its entire course from this to where it enters the sea, near the mouth of a great tidal river, does not exceed ten miles, yet in this short distance it crosses three distinctly marked districts. First there are the outskirts of the great Wold range; then the slightly undulating district known as the "Middle-marsh;" and lastly, the rich alluvial maritime plain of comparatively recent origin, fringed with its miles of embankment, like the famous "dykes" of Holland, warding back the waters of the shallow Eastern Sea.

Through the first of these districts our beck is but a little streamlet, and is almost lost amongst the flags and watercresses. It is only when it reaches the second division, the "Middle-marsh," that it rapidly increases in volume, for here it collects the waters of the many springs peculiar to this district. Here, too, its course is extremely tortuous, winding snake-like through a shallow valley, the land rising with a gentle inclination to the right and left. This valley, or basin, about three miles in length and averaging half a mile in breadth, was within the memory of many now living, and is to a certain extent yet, much in the same wild condition as when our forefathers knew it; and from what still remains we are able to form a very fair idea of the condition and appearance of the district in those old days.

There is no doubt that at, geologically speaking,

some comparatively recent date, the course of the little stream was much shorter. The whole of the maritime plain which now skirts the middle district was then under salt water. The sea, probably, at spring tides swept far up our beck valley, for along the flanks of the higher lands, both on the right and left, just beneath the surface soil, we find beds of drifted sand containing recent sea-shells: the common oyster, unlike, however, the great coarse-shelled oysters of the present coast, but shells in every respect resembling the "real native." Then there are cockles (*Carduelis edulis*), but twice the size of the present degenerate race, and other remains, the waifs and strays of old ocean, all proving that the sea had then freer access to the land, and our valley a narrow arm running inland nearly to the foot of the Wold hills; how long since, however, we leave geologists to determine.

The chief peculiarity of the "Middle-marsh" district consists in the many springs or "blow-wells," circular ponds of clear water, with a regular temperature of about fifty and a half degrees during the year, and fringed with dense masses of aquatic plants. They are scattered at irregular distances on both sides of the stream, throughout the valley, never freezing even in the sharpest winter. Popular tradition calls them unfathomable; not so, however—they rise from the chalk rock about twenty-five yards below, forcing their way to the surface through alternate layers of sand, gravel, and peat, and at all seasons pour forth an unfailing supply of clear, bright water. These ponds seldom contain any fish except pike, or a stray trout or two from the beck. Many years since, a pike weighing twenty-eight pounds was taken in the largest of them.

Here in summer we may see the moor-hen leading forth her sooty brood, or watch the shy water-rail lightly stepping over the floating pond-weeds. In winter they are the chosen retreat of duck and snipe. Then there are plantations, or rather thickets, as far as extent, almost impenetrable from the dense masses of reeds and tall herbaceous plants; even the most enthusiastic sportsman will pause before forcing an entrance, for they more resemble the growth of a tropical forest than an English cover. Here grow magnificent willow-herbs, in the later summer a blaze of crimson, rivalling in colour the Eastern oleander, the "willow by the water-brooks."

Other plants which flourish in this moist peaty soil are the yellow loosestrife, great valerian, and yellow water-iris. Here on summer evenings we listen to the shy grass-hopper warbler "reeling" out that strange song, if song it may be called, which more resembles the spinning of a line from a salmon reel when a twenty-pounder is hooked, than any other sound which we are acquainted

with—the fen-men call them “reelers” from their peculiar note—or listen to the rattling, merry, mocking notes of the sedge-bird.

Then as the shades of evening fall, we see flitting past in the gloaming the silent ghost-like form of the heron, his great concave wings slowly flapping, head thrown backward, and legs trailing rudder-like behind, crossing the streak of daylight along the horizon like a dark line, as he drifts slowly downwards to his favourite station near the old pollards.

Fifty years ago this spot was the haunt of the bittern, but it is now forty years since a bittern was shot there; and about the same period vanished other birds once common in the district—red-shanks, godwits, and the ruff and reeve.

The remainder of our valley was recently (for cultivation has of late sadly encroached upon it) a quaking bog, partly overgrown with sedges and tall reeds, and dotted here and there with thickets of alder and stunted willows. Here still linger a few rare bog-plants—but now rapidly disappearing under the magic wand of the drain-pipe and plough—the exquisite bog-pimpernel, the blue butterwort, the water-violet (*Hottonia palustris*), and that curious water-loving plant the hooded milfoil, and, not less beautiful than any of them, the pink waxen flower of the stately flowering rush (*Butomus umbellatus*).

Here too, in the pleasant autumn, we find the white cup-like flowers of the grass of Parnassus, each delicate petal veined with green. Patches of golden gorse hang along the skirts of the higher land, the last remnants of the ocean of gorse which once extended right and left for miles, reaching even the distant Wolds, and covering them in the early spring with a flood of golden glory.

Over this wild land, now probably the best cultivated district in England, once roamed in undisputed possession the noble bustard, and his lesser cousin the stone curlew or thick-kneed plover, and wild animals ages since exterminated. We have dug up, from the peaty bed of our stream, bones of animals long extinct in England, and in a neighbouring beck immense quantities of the bones and skulls of the half-wild ox (*Bos longifrons*) have been disinterred. Some of these wild animals may have been wounded in the chase, and come down to the thicket to die; others again, in forcing their way through the reed-beds, have perished miserably in the bog.

The characteristic tree of the district is the ash, now indeed sparsely scattered through the trim hedgerows; but in the olden days trees, in groups and single, stood here and there through the county; some few remaining to testify their grandeur to stunted and degenerate descendants—mighty giants whose twisted roots, each a tree in itself, take a firm grasp of the soil, their feathery

crowns upraised to catch the faintest rippings of the summer breeze.

Twenty years since, there stood on the brow of the hill, overlooking our valley, a lonely farm-house called “The Hall”—excepting two or three tumble-down cottages, the only house in the vicinity of the stream.

It was a great, rambling, dilapidated building, long past the zenith of its glory—and glorious days had the old house seen. It had been the residence for upwards of six hundred years of a powerful baronial race, ruling with feudal magnificence over miles of wold and marsh land; long the battleground of Saxon and Dane, but then, all ancient wrongs forgotten, settled side by side, joint tillers of the soil, paying one common allegiance to their Norman lord.

It was a noble demesne, well stocked, as the old records tell us, with wild boar and red deer, and swarming with wild fowl. Often, doubtless, from the high land fringing our beck, have the warrior barons and their fair ladies watched, with straining eyes and aching necks, the contest between the noble peregrine and stately “heronshawe.” But now all these live only in history, and in the painted heraldry in the old church, where graven in brass their effigies are yet seen; for time and man have dealt kindly with the old monuments, and they continue uninjured and undisturbed, much as in long centuries since.

When we first made acquaintance with the Hall it was tenanted by an old farmer, who cultivated the neighbouring fields, known as “The Hall Farm.” He had been a famous duck-shooter in his time, and many a long tale, in our young days, have we listened to of the state of the country “when he was a lad.” Often, too, in moonlight winter evenings, weary of our fruitless tramp after wild ducks, we have wandered up to the old house, and there, snugly seated in the corner of the wide chimney of the old-fashioned kitchen, thawing our frozen boots and leggings, listened with eager ears to the marvellous accounts of the flights of wild fowl which used to visit the valley in his younger days.

Making every allowance for the lapse of time and an old man’s memory, those must have been glorious days for the duck-shooter. Then, the whole of our beck valley was much in the same condition as I have described in the early part of this paper—cultivation had made but slight inroads into the bogs—high farming in those days was not thought of; often, too, rents were almost nominal, and there was not that pressing necessity to make two blades grow where only one grew before.

What a charm there was in these old man’s tales to our young ears, as we listened to the recollections of that severe winter, when frost and snow

continued almost without intermission from Christmas to Lady Day, and travelling along the old-fashioned country lanes to the small market town reminded one of a journey to the North Pole; for the snow was "reeked up aboon the hedge-tops," familiar land-marks were obliterated, and days were spent in cutting roads through the snow-filled lanes, often refilled by the next night's drifting storm.

But it was a grand time for the old duck-shooter. He shot so many that, as he expressed it, "they clear harrowed him." The "poor critturs were not worth powder and shot! He would shoot no more." Then there was the story of the three "heronshawes" killed at one shot, and the stalk after the wild swans down in the "carr," and two killed and one wounded at one discharge of the same mighty piece. And there overhead, strapped along the beam, carefully oiled and cleaned, was the veritable hero of the tale. With that old gun hanging above our head, who could disbelieve a word of the old man's stories? For our part, we received them as gospel, and would have wagered our new double-barrel that it was the truth, and nothing but the truth.

Then as for teal and snipe, and such-like small fry, why, in those days they never thought of shooting at them. Nothing but the fat mallard, the grey goose, or the snowy swan would satisfy the fastidious sportsmen of those rare olden times.

Dear old times! and dear old familiar faces! the tear rises to the eye as we think upon you. For "sweet is the recollection of Argos." The old house is pulled down, a modern farm-house and model buildings have arisen in its place, and trim modern fields surround them—the "happy hunting grounds" are no more.

Years since, the old man was gathered to his fathers. The storms of many winters have beaten upon that lowly mound in the quiet churchyard, and now all but levelled it with the surface; and in the next generation his very resting-place will be forgotten. Peace to his memory!

There is one corner of our valley which we must not pass over in silence. It still goes by the name of "The Decoy," and at this spot once flourished one of those famous snares for capturing wild fowl, for which our county was justly celebrated. It must now be a long period since it was in working order, for even in the earliest recollections of our old duck-shooting friend it was silted up, a deep morass, in part overgrown with weeds and sedges. The exact situation is now lost, for heavy crops of wheat and oats grow and ripen where once all was lake and thicket; and the call of the partridge and coo of the ring-dove are heard where bitterns "boomed," and coots "clanked."

The amount of wild fowl taken in these decoys

must have been very great, judging from the numbers now captured in the few existing decoys left in England.

We have before us the return made during thirty-five years of the ducks captured in the small decoy of Ashby, in North Lincolnshire. The total amount for thirty-five years, from the winter of 1833-34 to that of 1867-68, is 95,936 ducks (an average of 2,741 per annum), comprising 48,664 ducks, 44,568 teal, 2,019 widgeon, 285 shovellers, 278 pintail, and 22 gadwall. But this is nothing compared with the numbers captured in former days, when wild fowl were much more plentiful than in these days of deep drainage and steam cultivation.

Colonel Montagu, quoting from Mr. Pennant, mentions 31,200 taken in one season in decoys in the neighbourhood of Wainfleet, Lincolnshire; and that 2,646 "mallards," or drakes, were taken in two days near Spalding.

Many of our readers will probably think that the golden corn-fields and luxuriant turnips are a good exchange for the bogs and marshes surrounding the old decoy. We admit the improvement, yet to a certain extent regret the change. We feel we should like our children to see this England of the past; to hear the wild cries of the birds, as we have heard them; and to gather our rarer wild flowers in their native haunts. A little longer, and the old fauna and flora of this district will have vanished, improved off the face of the land; for so it is with these as with all earthly objects, ever

"The old order changeth, giving place to new."

And as the population of the country increases, so also will the land increase in value, and everything not directly subservient to the wants of man must give place to the more useful. For ourselves, we have spent many happy hours in watching the wild birds in their haunts, or in searching for rare plants amongst the patches of bog still left in our valley; and we feel sure that every naturalist and true lover of nature will understand the deep pleasure experienced in beholding for the first time some scarce bird, or finding some plant long familiar to us in books, but now for the first time gathered.

There are no pleasures so pure, none so lasting, as those found in the great book of nature; none which, amidst the toils and sorrows of life, are so capable of bringing rest to the weary, anxious mind; none, certainly, so readily within reach of the poorest of us. For,

"No life-muffled hum of a summer bee,
But finds some coupling with the spinning stars;
No pebble at your foot, but proves a sphere:
No chaffinch, but implies the cherubim:
* * * Earth's crammed with heaven,
And every common bush afire with God;
But only he who sees takes off his shoes."

THE SWING.



"FROM BOUGH SCARCELY BENDING."

WEEP on ! the leaves dance to the *dirl* of her
 laughter
 (A dance they were taught by the midsummer
 elves),
 And, blithe in their trusting, the birds follow after,
 As if the wee lady were one of themselves.

VOL. VII.—NEW SERIES.

Now bright in the sunshine, then duskily
 hiding
 Amid dappled shadow, she daringly swings :
 Happy eyes testify to the fancy abiding,
 And say she *is* elvish, and swear she has
 wings !

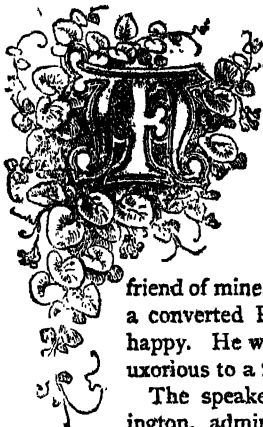
Sailing on, crescent-like, in her thistle-down light-
ness,
From bough scarcely bending to tremulous spray,
One foot peeping forth from the peach-blossom
whiteness
O' the gown, making ready for flight; but she'll
stay!
A gossamer thread at her girdle would hold her,
Were she Ariel's self, with a will of her own,
Now a mortal hath leant—how she listened!—and
told her
That flight would be folly if taken alone.

Ah! I dimly imagine his joy in the capture
Of her heart fresh and wilful, his pride in her
grace;
But should not marvel much if I learnt that his
rapture
Was clouded. Just look at the fire in her face!
Flash defiance, proud lady—or frowning or
smiling;
Valiant heart, good at core, none shall grudge
thee its fling;
But never be tempted by love of beguiling
To play with his proud plighted love—in a swing!
BYRON WEBBER.

HOW HE WON HER.

BY COMPTON READE.

IN TWO CHAPTERS.—CHAPTER THE FIRST



"Y dear, in these days we must be prudent, and, above all, cosmopolitan. In short, we must take what we can get—English or Scotch, if possible; if not, Irish, American, African, Hindoo. A great friend of mine, Laura M'Dermott, married a converted Parsee, and was really very happy. He was enormously wealthy, and uxorious to a fault."

The speaker is a certain Lady Rockington, administering a little advice to her niece and ward, Ellen Stacey, a young lady of singular beauty and grace, who, in reply, does but indulge in a half-suppressed sigh. Her aunt's worldliness seems to be surcharged with the logic of fact, but not with the more persuasive rhetoric of fancy.

"Yes, child; you may sigh, and look very ill-used. However, some day you will thank your aunt for —"

"I'm sure I'm not complaining," interrupts Ellen drearily.

"Complaining! I should think not, indeed. Why, there was my poor sister, your mother. What did the silly thing do? She married a wretched lieutenant—very handsome man; your father, my dear; large blue eyes, like yours, regular teeth, big brown moustache, and that sort of thing. Well, then, what happened? All kinds of horrors—bankruptcy, occasional fits of intemperance—Edward Stacey had no self-control—degradation. Then the worry brought on fever, and she died, and he went out of his mind; and altogether, my dear—"

"I mustn't do the same," says Ellen with a half-yawn.

"You shan't, if I can help it," rejoins the elder

lady sternly. "Do you imagine, my dear, that, because my sight is not all that it used to be, I haven't eyes? I've seen already too much of the encouragement you have given to that impertinent school-boy, Edward Capel."

"He's not a school-boy; and I've not—I've not perceived anything—anything over-attentive in his manner to me. Indeed, I haven't, aunt. People are so much more free-and-easy than they were formerly, that, that——" Miss Ellen is rather tremulous, for she is conscious that Lady Rockington is watching her tell-tale countenance like a cat a mouse.

"My dear, I assure you I am not at all disposed to be censorious. Only for your own sake, as you never could marry such a person as young Capel, I should wish that you would reserve your heart intact for the first really eligible offer. I don't want to flatter, Ellen, but you are decidedly attractive: and in India you will have offers. That, of course, mostly from men of middle age, high up in the service, or perhaps from men of mature years, who——"

"I suppose I may say yes or no?" ejaculated the fair girl, her colour rising.

"Of course, Ellen, of course. It is quite easy for a girl to make very much her own selection; for it follows that if you don't give a man a certain amount of encouragement, he won't be able to screw up his nerves to proposing point. Now, your dear uncle, Sir Charles, although lieutenant governor, and a man of the greatest distinction, was so retiring, so nervous, so embarrassed that really, when we were left together in the drawing-room on purpose to bring matters to an issue, he talked about the weather till I was so irritated that—there, I could have proposed myself on the spot."

"That would have been an assertion of woman's rights," remarked Ellen slyly.

"Fortunately, a butterfly from the conservatory happening at the right moment to settle on my wrist, he was enabled to seize my hand in order to catch the creature. I needn't add, my dear, that I held so tight by his fingers that he was obliged to declare himself. In short, I believe I owe my position, as Lady Rockington, to that butterfly—an emperor, my dear; Sir Charles pulled it all to pieces in his stupid agitation."

"But, aunt, you must make allowance for poor Sir Charles. He was so old, you know."

"Not the least old, Ellen—only fifty."

"Only?"

"Fifty, child, is a very good age for a sensible man to marry at. I was eighteen—young, impulsive, with some pretensions to looks, though not, I would own, as attractive as your poor mother. But I felt then as I feel now, that an income is everything in this world—simply everything. I had nothing—well—except myself, so I took the common-sense view of the matter, and expressed myself very grateful to Sir Charles. Your poor mother was indignant, and talked about a sacrifice to Mammon, and all that kind of romantic rubbish; but just look at the contrast. Here am I at forty, alive, well, in an excellent position, provided for in case of accidents, envied by nine out of every ten women of my acquaintance; whereas, your poor mother——"

"Is at rest," interrupts Ellen, rising, with a hurt expression of countenance.

They are occupying apartments in an hotel at Southampton, previous to sailing for India. Sir Charles has been at home for two years on furlough, and during that time Ellen Stacey has been under the dominion of her aunt, for whom she does not entertain any very great affection.

Lady Rockington is too cold and too dictatorial to amalgamate with a fresh-hearted, imaginative girl.

It is not improbable that Lady Rockington's unfeeling reflections on the misfortunes of her dead sister, might cause a disagreement of a very unpleasant character between herself and her niece.

Fortunately, however, at the critical moment, a quick rap at the door is followed at once by the entrance of a young man of very prepossessing appearance, whose frank manner and bright ways would seem likely to entrance the hearts of all who knew him.

"Oh, Mr. Capel!" cries Lady Rockington, looking anything but delighted.

Ellen Stacey's lips move, and the colour comes and goes in her fair face; but her eyes alone greet the intruder.

"How do, Lady Rockington?—How do, Miss Stacey?" he says in an off-hand fashion. "I've come all the way from London, partly to tell you a

bit of news you'll be glad to hear, partly to wish you good-bye."

"Sir Charles will be pleased to see you, Mr. Capel," replied Lady Rockington in the chilliest fashion.

"What is your news?" inquires Ellen in her softest tone.

"Simply this, Miss Stacey: that I have now every hope of remaining as secretary to Sir Charles. The Government would not permit him to appoint as his secretary a man in neither branch of the service; but, in consideration of Sir Charles's strong recommendation, and my college testimonials, they have offered me a cavalry cadetship."

One word of explanation about Mr. Capel. He is an under-graduate of a university, who has been acting as private secretary to Sir Charles during his residence in England. The old Indian official has been so gratified by the intelligence and diligence of the young man, that he has desired to retain his services in India, and was disappointed at his request to the Government having been refused.

"But," says Lady Rockington coldly, "you forget, Mr. Capel, that this cavalry cadetship will not necessarily place you at Fozzabad."

Fozzabad is the seat of Government where Sir Charles presides.

Mr. Capel looks grave for a moment. Then he replies—

"I don't know; but—but surely they would not have given me the appointment, if they had not intended me to be secretary to Sir Charles."

"Not at all," rejoins Lady Rockington; "you will be most likely sent to Madras, or some other part of India. You forget that there is more than one Presidency."

"Anyhow," he answered cheerily, "I hope I may have the pleasure of being stationed not very far from you."

Lady Rockington looks as if such an event would be anything but a pleasure. "We are civilians," she says, "and we don't as a rule see much of the other branch of the service." This very loftily.

This snub is so direct that he takes it as a hint that he is *de trop*. Accordingly, he accepts the tips of Lady Rockington's fingers, and, as he grasps the hand of Ellen Stacey with all the fervour of a lover, he adds—

"I shall follow you in the next steamer; I have but to pass my examination, and procure my outfit, and then——"

Perhaps he would say more; but he perceives such an expression of pain in the countenance of the girl whom he loves that he can but release her hand, and depart towards the P. and O. steamer, in search of Sir Charles.

The old veteran is standing thoughtfully on the quay. Perhaps he is wondering whether, at his

great age, he may reasonably expect to return to his native shore. His eyes are fixed steadfastly on the long dark outline of the P. and O. steamship *Ibis*, which on the morrow is to convey him eastwards, to add to an already ample fortune, or to find a grave among those for whose welfare he has devoted honourably a long life.

From this reverie he is awakened abruptly by the advance of a well-known footstep. In a trice he has warmly grasped the hand of young Capel, who tells his tale in the fewest words, adding modestly how grateful he should feel if Sir Charles continued his patronage.

"Why, boy," cries the old man, "what can you be thinking about? The Government have given you a commission in order to provide me with a secretary."

"Lady Rockington thought not. She suggested that I should be sent to Madras—or somewhere."

"Lady Rockington? Fudge! Hum! That is to say, Capel, you will dine with us. No excuses. You are on duty. In India you will be my military aide-de-camp, and your most onerous duty will be to order dinner; so, for goodness' sake, have a few lessons of Francatelli before you come out; and mind, boy, no dawdling. You must pass at once, and follow—"

"By the next mail, Sir Charles. I only wish that I could repeat Sir Colin's words, and say, 'to-morrow.'"

* * * * *

We shall now skip over some few months. The Rockingtons and Miss Stacey have been occupying Government House for some time. Edward Capel has been duly installed in his comfortable berth in the lieutenant-governor's suite, and inasmuch as his duties compel him to meet Ellen Stacey twice every day, it is not much to be wondered at that both the young people begin to understand each other, although not one word has passed which could be called a binding character. They are lovers, but have not declared themselves to each other, still less to the world, which, however, being abnormally perceptive, has its suspicions.

The beauty and worth of Ellen Stacey have been fully recognised by the station. Lady Rockington, ever generous in matters of display, has brought out with her a cargo of Parisian goods. Hence her niece is the leader of the Foozabad fashions, and held in reverence accordingly.

Among a countless host of admirers, one Mr. M'Duncan, a young Anglo-Indian of forty-nine, suffers much by an absorbing passion for Ellen Stacey. His income is about four thousand pounds annually, and he has saved. On his pretensions Lady Rockington casts a favourable eye. On his physique, and somewhat ancient manners, Miss Stacey looks askance. Nevertheless Mr. M'Dun-

can is not abashed. He believes that he has but to ask and have. Hence perhaps the conversation following:—

Mr. M'Duncan: "You have brought over with you, Sir Charles, a great addition to our station society."

Sir Charles, who doesn't understand compliments, or anything short of bald British: "Hey? what? You mean my aide-de-camp, Capel. Hey?"

Mr. M'Duncan, diffidently: "I—ah—alluded to Miss—ah—Stacey—Stacey"—this with emphasis—"and in fact, Sir Charles, I feel so decidedly attracted—attracted—that I—ah—" here he pauses, perhaps from a deficiency of breath.

Sir Charles, elevating his eyebrows and twitching the corners of his mouth: "You're in love, M'Duncan—hey? Well, go in and win. Look at me. Lady Rockington is now tolerably well-preserved. Twenty-two years ago, sir, I stood in your shoes. I was in love. What did I do? By Jove, M'Duncan, I acted like a man! Without any beating about the bush, and philandering, and nonsense, I said to Lady Rockington, 'Tell me my fate. Yes or no. I don't want any "ask papa's," or delays. Give me sudden life or sudden death.' Those were my words. The result was that I was accepted, sir—married, sir—and here we are."

Sir Charles has evidently forgotten the episode of the butterfly, or else Lady Rockington has been guilty of invention.

Mr. M'Duncan, slowly: "I have been thinking of asking your permission, Sir Charles, to pay my addresses to the young lady, but before I make such request I should like to be informed whether her affections are already engaged?"

Sir Charles: "How? what? hey? I don't understand. Engaged? Certainly not. Ellen Stacey's heart, sir, is virgin—like—hum!—snow."

Mr. M'Duncan, dubiously: "You are quite sure?"

Sir Charles: "Hey? Of course. Why not? Explain."

Mr. M'Duncan: "One ought not to pay attention to gossip, Sir Charles—gossip—but I have heard Mr. Capel's name coupled with that of Miss Stacey."

Without one word the plethoric and irritable lieutenant-governor dashes off to Lady Rockington, who at once confirms Mr. M'Duncan's assertion. Infuriated, he sends for his aide-de-camp. Edward Capel attends the summons promptly, and, as he stands face to face with his patron, you might have supposed such a splendid specimen of intelligent manhood and gentlemanly bearing would have been regarded with more favour, as suitor for a bright girl's hand, than the sere and yellow M'Duncan.

"I charge you," cries the lieutenant-governor, "with having basely attempted to purloin the affections of my niece, an act on your part as mean as it is ungrateful. You have misused, sir, your posi-

tion of confidence in this household—shamefully. You have acted in a manner unworthy of an officer and a gentleman. You—hum!—deserve to be cashiered. You—ha!—are unfit for the service. Why don't you answer me, sir? Hey?"

Not that ill-starred young Capel has much chance of reply, for the words have kept pouring forth from the angry old man's mouth like a veritable storm.

Thus brought to bay, Cornet Capel draws himself to his full height, as he answers—

"I might, Sir Charles, take refuge in a paltry subterfuge, and tell you that nothing has passed between Miss Stacey and myself. It is a fact; and I could take my stand upon it. But I will not. I confess that I am deeply attached to Miss Stacey. She is the love of my life. I have believed also—nay, more, I still believe, that she is not indifferent towards me.

I cannot be insensible to her kindness of manner. In short, there is a sort of free-masonry which tells a man when he is loved, and——"

"You impudent scoundrel!" roars Sir Charles, giving signs of incipient apoplexy.

"Hear me but for a second," cries Edward Capel. "I admit that I—we—have been guilty of a foolish romance. Suffer me to apply the lancet to the wound incisively. Sir Charles, I request that you will permit me at once to resign my office of aide-de-camp, and to join my regiment, which, being stationed some four hundred miles away, will be sufficiently remote from Miss Stacey. With your consent I will leave this place within an hour."

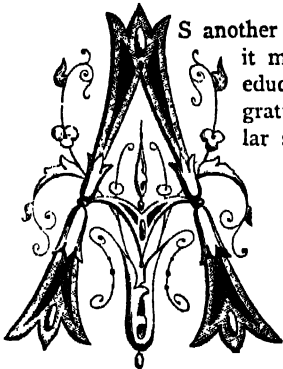
"Good," replies the lieutenant-governor, "you may go."

END OF CHAPTER THE FIRST.

OUR PRESENT NATIONAL EXPENDITURE.

BY HENRY FAWCETT.

IN TWO PARTS—PART THE SECOND.



Another example of extravagance, it may be observed that free education, free land, free emigration, and many other similar schemes are advocated in the same speech in which the most ardent protestations are made in favour of reducing expenditure. Has it never struck the advocates of such opinions that it is just as reasonable to expect that water will mix with oil, or that the lion will lie down with the lamb, as it is to suppose that we can make education, emigration, land, and many other things free, and at the same time have a reduction of expenditure? Surely it is not imagined that, by simply passing an Act of Parliament, many things will be provided gratuitously which before cost a great deal of money. If we had free education, free emigration, and free land, we should not get these things for nothing; the only change would be that, instead of being paid for by individuals, they would be paid for by the State. The State having to bear these new charges, a larger revenue would be required. There would, in fact, be increased expenditure and increased taxation.

The increase of expenditure in our own country is so much influenced by that of neighbouring nations, that it is necessary to make some reference

to the extravagant outlay which is now such a marked characteristic of the policy of almost every European country.

Directly any investigation is made into the expenditure of other countries, the extraordinary fact is forced upon our attention that, with three or four exceptions, every nation in Europe is living greatly beyond its means. Each year the revenue so much falls short of the expenditure, that an amount of indebtedness is being accumulated which it is almost appalling to contemplate. This era of extravagant expenditure and of reckless borrowing commenced about the time when the Imperial *régime* was established in France. Various nations then began to enter upon a rivalry in military armaments. Not only was the numerical strength of almost all the European armies greatly increased, but the foremost mechanical genius of the age was tempted by the offer of large government rewards to devote itself to the improvement of various implements of war.

Invention rapidly succeeded invention; military equipments not only became more costly, but had constantly to be changed. Military budgets consequently soon became so excessive, that the ordinary revenue of almost every government had to be supplemented by repeated loans in order to meet current expenditure. The following figures, however, will not only give the most accurate, but also by far the most forcible description of what has happened in the period to which we refer. Within the last twenty-two years France has in-

increased her debt (exclusive of the war indemnity to Germany) by £370,000,000; Austria, by £185,000,000; Russia, by £200,000,000; Italy, by £250,000,000; Spain, by £114,000,000; the new German Empire, by £120,000,000; and Turkey, by £100,000,000.

When it is found that in twenty years the aggregate indebtedness of these countries has increased by £1,339,000,000, can it be supposed that, if the system be continued much longer, industry will be able to struggle against the accumulated burdens it will have to bear? It may, however, be thought that England, because her national debt has not been lately increased, cannot be prejudicially affected by this enormous augmentation of the debts of other countries. In the first place it is to be borne in mind that, although the rivalry in armaments may not have caused England to increase her debt, as has been the case in other countries, yet it has necessitated her present large expenditure, upon which we have already commented.

But there is another consideration of probably greater moment. The £1,339,000,000 which have been borrowed since 1850 have been to no small extent obtained from England. Scarcely a year elapses without Russia, Austria, Italy, Turkey, Egypt, and many other countries obtaining a loan from England. It is also perfectly well known that English capital is largely invested in many foreign loans which are not raised in our own money-market. Hence it is evident that no inconsiderable portion of the capital which is annually accumulated in England, instead of being devoted to productive industry, is lent to foreign countries, and is unproductively consumed in the purchase of warlike material, and in the maintenance of soldiers who are drawn away from productive employment.

To this circumstance we may, no doubt, partially attribute the small increase in the remuneration of labour in this country during the last twenty-five years, compared with the unprecedented increase in national wealth. It is so much our habit to assume that the remuneration of labour advances *pari passu* with an increase of wealth, that when any facts are disclosed at variance with this assumption they not only excite surprise, but are received with incredulity.

Any one, however, who examines the statements contained in Mr. Brassey's book on "Work and Wages," will find it impossible to resist the conclusion that in many trades there has not been, during the period to which we refer, a sufficient advance in wages to compensate the labourer for the increase in the cost of living, and that in scarcely a single case has the advance in wages been at all proportionate to the increase of national wealth.

The following instances are selected from Mr. Brassey's book, and his authority may be accepted with complete confidence, not only because of his

great commercial experience, but also because his figures have been in every case obtained from the employers themselves, who are naturally anxious not to understate the earnings of their labourers.

After saying that since 1852 there has been no augmentation, until quite recently, in the wages earned by the operatives in the engineering trade, he proceeds to verify this assertion by referring to the wages earned by the various classes of workmen employed in the Canada Engineering Works at Birkhead. "The average number of hands employed in this establishment is 600, a sufficient number to afford a fair opportunity of testing the average wages in the mechanical trades throughout the country."

Average Weekly Wages paid to Skilled Workmen in the Canada Works at Birkhead.

	1854.	1869.
	s. d.	s. d.
Fitters	29 0 ..	30 0
Turners	29 4 ..	29 4
Coppersmiths and Braziers	31 6 ..	30 9
Grinders	27 0 ..	23 0
Smiths	31 0 ..	30 0
Boilersmiths	34 0 ..	36 0
Bricklayers	34 0 ..	34 0
Saddlers and Beltmakers	26 0 ..	26 0
Forgemen	36 6 ..	32 6
Painters	24 0 ..	23 0
Moulders	32 0 ..	31 6
Joiners and Patternmakers	28 0 ..	30 0
Boilermakers	31 6 ..	32 0

There has no doubt been a considerable advance in wages during the last two or three years; but, as previously remarked, industry during this period has been stimulated by so many exceptional circumstances, that the continuance of this commercial prosperity ought not to be too confidently calculated upon.

Amongst the many other trades in which Mr. Brassey makes a comparison of the wages earned for some years past, the following may be selected.

From a table compiled by Admiral King Hall, C.B., it appears that the wages paid in the Government dock-yard at Sheerness during the years 1849, 1859, and 1869 were as follow:—

	1849.	1859.	1869.
	s. d.	s. d.	s. d.
Shipwrights	4 0 ..	4 6 ..	4 6
Caulkers	4 0 ..	4 6 ..	4 6
Forgemen	7 0 ..	7 0 ..	7 0

The wages paid in private shipbuilding-yards to similar workmen were somewhat higher; but it must be remembered that those who are employed in the Government dock-yards are more certain of regular employment. This compensates them to some extent for their lower wages, for the shipbuilding trade is liable to such severe fluctuations that it not unfrequently happens that, in times of financial pressure, greater numbers of hands are dismissed from the private than from the Government yards.

The building trade is specially alluded to by Mr.

Brassey as one in which there has been the most marked rise in wages. This is particularly the case in London, and in those towns which are most rapidly extending. The rise, as is proved by the figures quoted by Mr. Brassey, amounts to 25 or 30 per cent. ; but, great as the advance appears to be, it really represents a very slight increase in the remuneration of labour.

There has lately been such a considerable advance in the price of many articles of ordinary consumption, and there has also been so great a rise in house rent, that the cost of living is so much augmented as to make it probable that an advance in wages of 20 per cent., during the period to which reference has been made, is quite inadequate to effect any decided improvement in the condition of the labourer.

An agricultural labourer in the West of England, with whom I have just been conversing, upon being asked what wages he is now getting, said, "I get eleven shillings a week now, and I only got nine

shillings a week some years since ; but everything is so dear now that I was just as well off, or better, when I had the nine shillings a week."

I must not be tempted to pursue the subject further. No problem in economic science can possess more interest and importance, than the endeavour to discover how it has come to pass that an unprecedented increase in wealth has been accompanied by no corresponding improvement in the condition of the labourer. The result is no doubt due to the combined influence of many causes.

Amongst these causes, a position of chief prominence ought, doubtless, to be given to the present extravagant national expenditure of this and other countries. To what an extent might not the general well-being of the country be promoted if the vast amount of wealth, which we not only spend ourselves, but which we lend to other countries to be squandered in warlike preparations, were devoted to productive industry?

HESTER MORLEY'S PROMISE.

BY HESBA STRETTON,

AUTHOR OF "THE DOCTOR'S DILEMMA," ETC. ETC.

CHAPTER THE NINETEENTH.

CARL'S CONFESSION.

MISS WALDRON heard no more of her gift to Hester. By one common consent, arrived at by different processes, all those who had become acquainted with the circumstance permitted it to drop into apparent oblivion. Hester knew nothing of Annie's plan of revenge which had been prematurely nipped ; and as she never mentioned Miss Waldron's present again, Annie did not care to speak of it. She could not but acknowledge that her husband and Carl were right when they said that the whole thing must be suffered to pass, and that it would be dangerous to make an enemy of Miss Waldron. But she was glad Robert knew, exceedingly glad. She had no doubt it would come out some day or other from his lips, and cover his sister with confusion. In the meantime it was very difficult to maintain a pleasant and cordial demeanour towards her, when she came to see her and Carl so often.

This action of Miss Waldron had thrown difficulties into the paths of all. To Hester it made it a far from easy task to go to Aston Court, as she felt herself compelled to go, in order to finish the business arrangements with Mr. Waldron, who had insisted upon advancing a sum of five hundred pounds instead of two hundred, which would set John Morley clear from his liabilities for about

twelve months to come. Robert, on his part, found it so hard to keep this secret, and restrain his wrath, that he was not sorry when some pressing business demanded his presence in London, though it prevented him seeing Hester upon her rare visits to his father.

But for Carl the difficulty was tenfold. He had now been pastor of the church at Little Aston for more than six months, and Miss Waldron began to be impatient at the slowness of his comprehension with respect to the marks of preference she showered upon him. She had become at last aware of a growing coldness in Annie Grant's manner, which was at once unaccountable and unpardonable, seeing that both Grant and Carl were under the patronage of her family. She could not brook any caprices in her inferiors ; but it was necessary to overlook those of Annie Grant, on account of Carl, whose study she could not invade if she had any serious disagreement with his sister. Her attachment for the young, handsome, and eloquent minister was growing into a folly, for the sake of which she was ready to sacrifice any pique, or endure any coolness from Annie. She fostered a hope, gathering strength every day, that Carl would at length take courage to woo the wealthy and eminent daughter of his patron. On his part, Carl, without Annie's aid, perhaps, would have been no slower

than any other young man to understand her tokens of preference ; but they were no pleasure to him. How to act he did not know. He was most anxious to put an end to them ; but he did not at all see how it could be done. His delicate reverence for womanhood, and his dignified sense of duty as a pastor, imposed upon him the task of setting her to rights as soon as possible. He felt that their present intercourse hampered him and made him falter in many of his duties ; and he waited with impatience some opportunity for gently and considerately dispelling her illusion. The opportunity arrived at last.

"You regard me as a sister, Carl?" Miss Waldron said one evening as they crossed the park together, in the dusk, after she had stayed so long at Grant's house as to be afraid to return home alone. She had of late relinquished her strong-mindedness.

"Certainly," answered Carl somewhat absently.

"Then you ought to tell me of my faults," she said plaintively ; "I know I have so many faults, and by this time you must have discovered them. Poor dear old Mr. Watson used to say he could not see any ; but you have keener sight than he had, Carl."

She dropped her eyes, and half turned away her face, lest Carl's keen sight should read her thoughts too plainly.

"How I would conquer any fault you pointed out!" she continued, with effusion. "Oh, this would be true friendship ! I should like you to tell me *all* you think of me. Could you not tell me all you think of me, dear Carl?"

"I am afraid I should offend you," said Carl in a low voice, the tone of which she misunderstood.

"Oh, no ! you could not offend me," she replied ; "it would be impossible ! Oh, Carl ! you don't know how I should love the truth from your lips. Sometimes while you are preaching I wonder if anybody can attain to the standard you set before us. Do you know anybody who is even striving after it, Carl?"

"Yes, one," he answered.

"And who is that one?" she asked with a beating heart ; "is it yourself, dear Carl?"

"Not even myself," he said gravely ; "I think my standard is simply this : 'If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily and follow me.' I dare not say that I have attained to this forgetfulness of self, this daily cross."

"But who then is the one that does?" demanded Miss Waldron.

"Hester Morley," answered Carl, with a secret exultation and great gladness of spirit.

Miss Waldron felt herself pierced through with this poignant shaft. She half withdrew her hand from Carl's arm ; but he, with an involuntary sympathy for the pain he had inflicted, pressed it closer

to his side ; and with a fresh hope she laid it again more firmly and heavily upon its resting-place.

"I can tell you," he said rapidly, "what I can say to no one else, with what delight I have watched Hester. She is more than what I once dreamed of women in my college days. My dreams were poor and vague. I did not know then what a woman's heart is."

"And you love her?" murmured Miss Waldron.

"Yes," he answered, lifting his hat from his head, with an instinctive gesture of reverence. "I love Hester as I love all that is good and true and lovely. I should be blind and foolish if I could do otherwise."

"Hester Morley!" cried Miss Waldron in a voice of anguish ; "and I warned you against her!"

"If I had received a thousand warnings," said Carl, "it would have been the same."

"And you have proposed to her!" she exclaimed—"you are engaged to her?"

"No," he replied ; "I do not know that I shall ever tell her that I love her. She has another suitor, far above me, who has perhaps won her love. If Hester is not tempted by your brother's riches, I shall ask her to share my poverty."

"My brother!" ejaculated Miss Waldron.

"Yes," he said ; "you told me yourself that he met her clandestinely. I know that he formed an attachment for her many months ago."

"Do you suppose that Robert Waldron, of Aston Court, could ever marry John Morley's daughter?" she asked bitterly.

Carl did not answer, and she walked beside him for some minutes in silence, striving to keep down the passion which would fain have found vent. She could not conceal from herself the reason of this confidence reposed in her before he had owned his love to Hester herself. He had detected the sentiments which she had cherished for him. He, the unknown, penniless, friendless student, chosen by herself, put into his living by her hand, had discovered that she loved him—and rejected her ! She knew very well that she had not attempted to hide her affection for him ; but her mortification was none the less bitter.

"I do not ask you to keep my secret," said Carl gently. "I do not know that I wish it to be a secret. If it were not that I have promised to leave Hester unbiassed, if my honour was not pledged to do so, I should have asked John Morley for his daughter before this. Not that we could marry at present—we are both young—but that I might have the right to help her, that we might help each other, to bear the sorrows of life."

His voice, which had been calm at first, faltered as he uttered the last sentence, and fell into such a tone of tenderness that Miss Waldron felt as if she could not bear to hear him speak another word. At that moment, for the first time in her life, she

felt old. These two young creatures, Carl who was ten years her junior, and Hester whom she had scarcely ceased to consider as a child, stood before her for an instant in a separate world of youth and glory. How warm and bright and joyous was the youth she had left behind her ! She felt herself suddenly at a great disadvantage. She was a thing laid aside, a being passed by, while Hester rejoiced in a wealth which no money could ever purchase. She shivered at the thought of being old. A desperate struggle was going on in her mind. Only

all I know. John Morley is in imminent danger of bankruptcy and disgrace. In fact, but for my father he would have been a bankrupt already."

It was Carl's turn to feel a painful contraction of the heart. If John Morley had surrendered his ancient resentment so far as to suffer himself to be saved from bankruptcy by the Waldrons, could it be anything else but a sign of what must be the end? He had never before chafed at his narrow means ; but now, as he compared his own salary of one hundred and fifty pounds—for fifty pounds had been



"ABSORBED IN HER MELANCHOLY THOUGHTS."

one thing was clear to her—she must bear herself bravely before Carl.

"You have taken me a little by surprise," she said ; "yet, now I come to think of it, nothing could be more natural. You recollect I predicted something like this. Hester is of your own age, and your own rank in life ; you could not look much higher. She is the only girl in our congregation who is your equal by birth and education ; the others, no doubt, are somewhat beneath you. I wish, for your sake, that John Morley was not so greatly involved in difficulties."

"I know they are poor," said Carl.

"Worse than that," continued Miss Waldron. "After your confidence, I feel justified in telling you

added to it since the old pastor's death—with the large income of Robert Waldron, he felt that life was very unequal. Almost any passionate emotion makes man long for that lost equality which is, perhaps, part of the forfeit for the original sin of ambition. It seemed preposterous to Carl that Robert should receive monthly twice his annual income. Set them down in circumstances on a perfect level, and see which would prove himself the better man ! But now, because he could rescue Hester and her father from poverty and disgrace, he would no doubt attain his end, and Hester would be lost to him.

"Miss Waldron," he said, after a long pause, "I do not suppose I shall ever tell Hester of my love.

It seems to me as if she will never belong to me. But I shall never love any other woman as I love her. If John Morley were branded for the vilest of crimes in the face of the whole world, she would still be the woman I love."

"It is an infatuation!" muttered Miss Waldron, between her teeth.

"Perhaps so," he answered calmly, "but it is an infatuation sweeter than any pleasure I ever tasted."

"You are not the devoted servant of God I thought you," she said austere.

"I trust I am his servant," replied Carl, with increasing calmness; "and I hope that every day will find me more devoted to his service. But he does not require me to be blind. If he should give Hester to me, I would take her as his most precious gift. But if not, what else can I do but submit myself to his will?"

Miss Waldron did not answer, but she withdrew her hand finally from his arm. Carl understood the significant action, and felt sorry for it; but he fancied that her good sense, if not her religion, could at least establish peace between them in the course of a few days. It was most desirable that he should continue to be on friendly terms with the most influential woman belonging to his church. He believed firmly in her goodness still, though he had sounded the shallowness of her mind: and it did not occur to him that she might nurse her jealousy and disappointment into revenge. In silence they completed their walk; and when Miss Waldron dismissed him coldly, without asking him to go in, he turned away a little sorrowful for her, but not in the least apprehensive for himself.

Miss Waldron was doomed to receive a second blow the same night, almost as severe as the first. Before she had time to yield to the passion which Carl's confession had awakened, her father entered the room where she was still sitting, with her bonnet and shawl on, in an apathetic state of bewilderment. Mr. Waldron was growing impatient for the success of his schemes, while Robert was hanging back from the fatal moment which must decide the future relationship between himself and Hester. It was all in vain that his father reminded him that faint heart never won fair lady. There was one memory which always made his heart faint, whenever he thought of asking for the hand of John Morley's daughter. Mr. Waldron resolved at last to consult his daughter. If she, the infallible oracle of the house, could be won over to his side, Robert would surely lay aside his fears.

"My dear," he said, "it is probable that Robert will at last consent to marry. It is what we have both desired for years. You have never given me a moment's uneasiness; but for him I am still anxious. To marry a religious woman might be the salvation of his soul. For what says the apostle?—'The unbelieving husband is sanctified by the wife.'"

As he uttered the familiar quotation, conscience carried back his memory to the day when he and his old pastor had gone to expostulate with John Morley upon his approaching marriage. But this case, he said to himself, was altogether different. His son, though not a professed member, was as it were in the porch of the church, and needed only Hester's hand to guide him into its inner sanctuary.

"Robert," he continued, after a scarcely perceptible pause, "loves a girl, beautiful, well educated, and pious. She has, it is true, neither money nor position; but these are mere accidents of life, of which Christian people should make no account. I have been accused of pride, and looking down upon the other members of the church as our inferiors. This marriage will be a fresh link between us."

He spoke with the air of a sovereign who makes some great concessions to his people. Miss Waldron preserved an ominous silence, but she lifted herself up, and raised her head, to hear what was coming next.

"Yes," he said, "Robert is in love with Hester Morley; and he has my full approbation and consent. It will heal old wounds, and make atonement for the past. You know Hester well; she has been almost like your own child. You will give her a sister's welcome, Sophia." It was an uncommon occurrence for her father to pronounce her name, and he did it in a softened voice. But Miss Waldron did not catch the softening of the tone, nor her name, as she rose majestically from her chair, with a dull gleam in her eyes, and her lips working with a passion now too strong to control.

"Never!" she exclaimed; "if you are become a fool, and Robert an idiot, I shall retain my sense of what is fitting and right. Never will I consent to look upon Hester Morley as my sister."

She shuddered at the bare mention of such a thing; and casting a frown at her father which filled him with dismay, she sailed out of the room with an air of dignity that concealed how crushed and wounded her spirit had been that day.

CHAPTER THE TWENTIETH.

HESTER AT THE HALL.

OPPOSITION had always been congenial to Mr. Waldron. He had enjoyed pressing towards any object through a whole host of opponents, and then watching them gradually reconcile themselves to a measure which they had done their utmost to prevent. But his daughter's positive and active antagonism to his scheme made him feel vexed and unhappy. He did not think for a moment of giving it up; but he had reckoned upon Miss Waldron's feminine penetration, and upon the interest and affection of long standing which he supposed to exist between her and Hester. He was very far

indeed from divining the mixed motives which were at war in his daughter's mind.

Miss Waldron herself, with all her long practice in analysing her own inner life, could not dissect her present feelings, but for the time gave herself up to uncontrolled passion. Her closet, that night and the next day, could have told of a very different scene to the usually calm and self-complacent devotions of its mistress. The whole circle, Hester, Carl, Grant and his wife, were her dependents and inferiors, yet she had no power to punish them. Had she no power? She would think about it.

The business transactions which had brought Hester occasionally to Aston Court were now concluded. John Morley had received a loan from Mr. Waldron upon a mortgage, and had spent a portion of it at once in paying the most pressing of his creditors; but the tide of debt was still mounting, and would soon overflow this feeble breakwater. Secretly it was upon John Morley's poverty that both Mr. Waldron and Robert built their hopes: a more sandy foundation than either of them expected. The future to be offered to Hester was so dazzling compared to her present lot, so far beyond anything her most daring girlish fancies could have dreamed, that they counted upon awakening her ambition. It was incredible that a position which would be eagerly snatched at by many a well-born and wealthy family, could be rejected by the daughter of a man hopelessly involved in business embarrassments. Looking at it in this light, Mr. Waldron felt satisfied that Hester would gladly become Robert's wife. Going round to the other side, and regarding the projected marriage with the purged and enlightened eyes of a Christian man who knows this world to be no more than the training school for eternity, a chilly doubt crept over him that she could not be tempted by all the grandeur and ease they could offer to her.

Robert Waldron was growing hungry for a sight of Hester. Strange to say, though he had haunted old madame's garret, to his own imminent danger and her uncontrollable terror—for Lawson had begun to dart in home at all sorts of unexpected moments—he had never happened to come across Hester. He had found it impossible to stay long away from Little Aston, and since his return not a day had passed without his paying a visit to madame. But the little one did not come to see her so often, said madame; on the contrary, she sent to invite her to visit her in her own home, which was much more triste than her little garret.

But the chance came at last—the hour so long waited for. The very morning after Miss Waldron's defiance of her father's wishes, Hester felt obliged to pay her last visit to Aston Court—a visit of gratitude rather than of business. She had still no

special desire to avoid meeting Robert. Her large girlish heart embraced him, as it did her father and Rose, in a warmth of pity and sorrow which could never make her feel indifferent to him. They were all three lost in a labyrinth, where they wandered solitarily and in toilsome paths; and she, looking on with tearful eyes, longed to lead them back to a resting-place.

She found Mr. Waldron, as she had hoped, alone, and she uttered her thanks in few but expressive words. She told him that the sum he had advanced would meet their expenses for the next half-year.

"And what after that?" asked Mr. Waldron in a tone of anxiety.

"I can scarcely tell," answered Hester, with a smile faltering between fear and courage; "I am not afraid—not very much afraid, at least. Something may happen before then."

"You would do anything for your father's sake, Hester?" he said.

"Anything," she repeated fervently; "only show me what I can do, and I will do it."

Mr. Waldron took both her hands into his, and looked with marvellous gentleness into her pale face, with its faint smile.

"My dear child," he said, "I have a plan in my mind for you which would set your father free from his difficulties, and place you both in a position above care of any kind. You are a brave good girl, and I love you like a daughter. You could trust yourself in my hands, Hester?"

"Yes," she answered, lifting her eyes to his, inquiringly.

"Stay here a few minutes," he added; "I am not quite ready to tell you my plan yet."

He went away, leaving her in the room which she remembered to have first entered with Rose. The great life-size portraits of Luther and Melancthon gazed down steadily upon her from the wall, as they had done when she looked up wonderingly to them as a little child. The recollection was more vivid and sad than usual, for she had left Rose in a paroxysm of vain remorse in her poor refuge. She recalled their meeting with Robert in the park the first time she had ever seen him, and the light, gay, fine air of happiness which to her eyes had surrounded both him and Rose. Hester's face had assumed again its pallor and care, which had almost vanished for a little while; and she looked once more like a blanched and frail flower which has grown up without sunshine. When Mr. Waldron left her, she leaned back in her chair, and closed her eyes with a languor to which she would not yield in any one's presence; and so absorbed did she grow in her melancholy thoughts, that she did not hear the opening of the door, as it turned almost noiselessly upon its hinges.

A SCENE IN CAIRO.

BY WILLIAM GILBERT.



AMONG the many reformatations carried out in the domestic administration of Egypt during the sovereignty of the present Khedive, one of the most praiseworthy, yet perhaps the least known, is the vast improvement which has been effected in female medical education. Strange as it may appear, in this respect at least the enlightenment or civilisation of modern Egypt is vastly superior to our own; and the comparison will hold good not only as respects the general public, but the majority of the medical profession as well.

While in England the Faculty, as a rule, have set their faces against the admission of women into the profession, the doctors in Egypt have not only encouraged them to study medicine, at least as far as the diseases of women and children are concerned, but, with the approbation of the Khedive, have drawn out and established for them a curriculum of professional education, including chemistry, botany, physiology, and female anatomy, which are carried to a degree fully on a par with a pass examination at Apothecaries' Hall, in London.

The result of this has been that, while in London a large proportion of the women of the working classes, and nineteen out of twenty of the female paupers in our workhouses, are attended by women whose principal recommendation among the medical profession seems to be that they have received no scientific education whatever, in Cairo, even among the lowest population, the women and children are attended by well-instructed female practitioners. These, in point of ability and devotion to their particular branch of the profession, will perhaps not be inferior to the average male practitioner in any part of the world.

My attention was first called to this subject about two years since. When dining one day at the *table-d'hôte* in Shepherd's Hotel, Cairo, I accidentally seated myself beside a French gentleman, Dr. X—, who, I shortly found, had resided some twenty years in Egypt, and was a member of the Viceroy's Army Medical Staff.

The conversation turned on the state of the medical profession in Egypt, in the course of which he adverted to the extreme difficulties which attended the introduction of the study of medicine into the country; this not solely arising, as was erroneously imagined, from the fatalism which forms so vast a portion of the Mohammedan creed, but from the

great aversion they had to allow male medical practitioners to attend their families.

Indeed, so great was their repugnance to a system of the kind, that when, during the Viceroyalty of Mohammed Ali, the attempt was made to establish a medical school after the European fashion, so determined were the Mussulmans to refuse all medical aid for their families, that it was at first feared the attempt would prove abortive.

The small-pox, however, at the commencement of Clot Bey's endeavours to form a medical staff, broke out with great violence in Cairo, and all efforts of the native doctors to control it proved even more ineffectual than usual on occasions of the kind. The Mohammedans, when the disease broke out in their families, dreading the visits of the medical men, concealed the fact with so much tenacity, that at last the epidemic reached such terrible proportions as to necessitate very stringent measures being adopted to suppress it.

An order was given that every house should be visited by the medical men (principally French) attached to the Government Staff. Against this order the inhabitants rebelled, and some of the medical men who attempted to enter the most populous and infected portions of the town were severely maltreated.

Mohammed Ali suppressed these rebellious symptoms in a very energetic, though perhaps somewhat too "Turkish" a manner. The morning after the news of the disturbance had reached him, the quarter of the town in which it had occurred was surrounded by the troops of the Viceroy. The Chief of the Police established in the centre a court of inquiry, and a multitude of the rioters were brought before him. Of these he hanged six on the spot, and bastinadoed fifty others with so much severity that they were obliged to be carried out of his presence. This energetic proceeding had the result of calming the disturbance for the time, and things went on more smoothly for the future.

Still, in spite of despotic ordinances and severe police regulations, the Mussulmans continued their prejudice against male medical practitioners attending their wives and families. This state of things continued till the accession of the present Khedive, when, on the suggestion of Burguières Bey, the present head of the medical staff in Egypt, a school was established for midwives. In this they were to pass through a regulated course of study before they should be allowed to practise, and that of sufficient severity to insure for the female population of Egypt a proper and scientifically educated body of women, capable of taking,

in all cases excepting those of extreme severity, the medical charge of their own sex.

I was so much interested in the description my friend gave me of the medical profession in Egypt, that when he was about to leave I ventured to ask him whether it would be possible for me to obtain more information on the subject.

"Certainly," he replied; "I shall be most happy to give you any you may require, and you can at once have a good opportunity of judging by your own experience of the manner in which these women are educated, and the value their services are to the community at large. To-morrow the examination of those who have passed through their course of study will take place in the school of medicine attached to the Great Hospital. If you would like to be present, I can assure you there will be no difficulty; or if you have any diffidence on the subject, I shall be happy to conduct you there, as I intend being present at the examinations."

I willingly accepted his offer, and he promised to call on me the next morning and conduct me to the Hospital.

Dr. X— was punctual to his appointment, and the next day two donkeys (after the fashion of the Caireenes) having been provided for us, we started off for the Great Hospital, which was about a mile and a half distant from the hotel. On the way Dr. X— gave me a considerable insight into the medical municipal organisation of Cairo, which, in many respects, might be copied with a good deal of benefit by the municipal authorities of London. Cairo, he told me, was divided into ten *toumni* or districts, situated at equal distances, each of them having a public dispensary, to which were attached a physician, a surgeon, an apothecary, and a certificated female attendant; so that no person could be seized with illness, or receive any accident, but medical attendance of the best class might be obtained in less than five minutes. If the cases are of no great importance, they are relieved and sent to their own homes; but if of any considerable severity, the patients are forwarded to the Great Hospital.

Every evening the number of accidents, births, or cases of sudden illness calling for assistance from the professors of the *toumni*, which have taken place during the last four-and-twenty hours, are forwarded to the central office, where they are registered. Once a week was set apart for vaccination cases, when women from all parts of Cairo brought their children to be vaccinated.

"You would do well," continued Dr. X—, "to attend at one of these *toumni*, at Boulac for example" (the Southwark of Cairo), "for the cases there are more numerous than in any other. There are frequently to be seen between two and three hundred of these women attending with their babies, some for the purpose of vaccination, others for the doctor to see the arms of those already operated upon,

to ascertain how they are progressing, and others again to receive the certificate that the cure is completed satisfactorily. The women appear to have the highest respect for these certificates, and preserve them with great care. They consider them as a sort of amulet or charm, which will preserve the child from misfortune or accident."

We continued chatting in this manner till we had arrived at the entrance court of an immense building situated on the banks of the Nile. After passing through one quadrangle, we entered a second, in which we found the military band of the Viceroy arranged round their music-stands, apparently waiting for an order to commence playing. We now entered the amphitheatre of the school of medicine, which was already tolerably crowded.

On a sort of dais or throne sat the President of the Medical Staff of Egypt, and Head Physician to the Viceroy, Burguières Bey. Before him was a table, on which were three vases, and below on the floor of the amphitheatre was a long table, on which lay a skeleton and several herbs.

I inquired of my conductor what the vases contained, and he told me there were in them a number of slips of paper containing questions to be asked. In one vase were those on botany and materia medica; in another, questions on anatomy, especially of the female subject; and the third, on diseases of women and children. A certain number of these questions would be drawn out at hazard from each vase, and the candidates expected to answer them. After each department had been gone through, the question was put to the council of physicians for their decision as to the correctness of the replies, each in his turn being invited to ask any question he pleased on the subject under consideration.

To the right of the president was a sort of *log-gione* or box, in which sat a dozen or fifteen elderly men, with turbans, wearing an amount of stolid gravity on their countenances, greatly at variance with the intelligence marked on the faces of the medical men present. I inquired of my conductor who those grave-looking men might be. He told me they were the principal *ulemas*, or priests, of the different mosques in Cairo, and that they attended on the present occasion to show their respect and approval of female medical education.

I at first thought the reverend gentlemen were somewhat out of place at an examination of the kind, but the idea then occurred to me that the same objection might be made to my own presence, so I made no remark on the subject.

Behind the medical council, who were seated in a semi-circle at a little distance from the table, were a number of medical students, and others tempted by curiosity to be present on the occasion; and behind these again, on the top row of benches lining the wall, were some sixteen or eighteen

women, but whether old or young, handsome or ugly, it was impossible to say, for they all wore the long, white, opaque veil, leaving their eyes only visible, while their persons were covered with long, loose, black silk dresses. On remarking to my conductor the singular uniformity in their dress, he told me it was their habitual costume, and moreover that when called out to attend any case they always rode on donkeys with red saddle-cloths, so that the mission they were bound on should be known, and all persons make way for them—a practice which, though adopted voluntarily, is as faithfully respected as if it had been an order from the police.

Burguières Bey having made a sign that the examination should commence, one of the candidates was led down to a space in front of the table. To judge of her appearance, as before stated, was impossible. The only conclusion I arrived at (though I afterwards heard she was twenty years of age) was that she was a Nubian, and this from the coal-black colour of her hands, the only portion of her visible. The examination commenced by a series of questions on the anatomy of the female subject, especially on osteology and myology, or to speak in more common phraseology, on the bones and muscles. After the first question, which had been drawn from the vase by the president, had been satisfactorily answered, each of the council in turn put others to her. Although the questions and answers being in Arabic were unknown to me, the pupil seemed to answer all to the perfect satisfaction of her questioners, and with an amount of *aplomb* fully equal to that of any self-assured pupil passing an examination at the College of Surgeons in London. These questions, which lasted about twenty minutes, being over, she was next examined on the diseases of women and children, and the different operations which might come under her notice; the whole of which were answered in as satisfactory a manner as those on anatomy.

The president now rose and drew from the vase a question on *materia medica*. This she answered equally well, and the subject was then taken up by the professors, and her medical examination was concluded. Before, however, putting the question of her admission to the vote, Burguières Bey asked if she would like to pass an examination in any foreign language. She might do so if she pleased, but it was not compulsory. She immediately selected French, and a professor of the French language being present then wrote on a slate—

Le premier devoir de l'élève est de garder, toute sa vie, une profonde gratitude pour ses maîtres.

This phrase she translated and analysed word for word in the most perfect manner, and was examined on other subjects connected with the French language and literature, all of which she answered with so pure an accent, and in such correct grammar, as to call forth the compliments of all present.

The question was now put by the president as to her reception into the Faculty of Medicine. The unanimous decision was that she should be received into the obstetric branch of the profession, and was entitled to the customary honours for the examination. I was on the point of asking my companion what those honours were, when the military band outside the building commenced playing the Egyptian national air with such vigour as to drown my voice, and I was obliged to rest till it concluded. I then inquired what were the honours to which the candidate was entitled.

"You have just heard them," he replied.

"Heard what?" I asked.

"The honours offered to her. Whenever a woman passes an examination in a satisfactory manner, the Viceroy's military band, stationed there for the purpose, plays the Egyptian national air in her honour."

I thought a better method might have been introduced, and one more appropriate to the subject, but I kept my opinion to myself.

Another student was now called down, who, judging from the lighter colour of her hands, was probably a Copt. The same formalities were again gone through, she passing her scientific examination as satisfactorily as the former. When asked whether she would like to pass the examination in any other language she selected Italian, and although it would hardly be correct to state that she succeeded as well as the Nubian did in French, it was, after all, very creditable. When reading, she translated very fluently into Arabic, but somewhat halted in her conversation.

We were now invited by the president to leave the school and partake of some refreshment, which had been set out for us in a large hall in the building.

The repast was in every respect of a purely Egyptian style, unmingled with any French or Russian refinements. There were eight tables in the hall, at each of which were seated six guests. A roast lamb was first placed on the table, and a knife. From this each guest in succession cut off a portion and put it on his plate, leaving the knife on the dish for the use of his neighbour. Pieces of bread were also placed beside each person, to be used instead of vegetables, our fingers doing the duty of knives and forks. The lamb was then removed from the table, and servants bearing large brazen dishes with water, and a towel, attended us that we might wash our hands. A pilau with rice was then placed on the table, which was taken from the dish with a large spoon, and eaten with the fingers on the bread, somewhat in the fashion of the *trenchers* or pieces of bread which, some three or four centuries back, used to take the part of plates in England. The same ceremony of washing hands was again gone through, and then some other dish placed before us, and so on, till at last the president

gave the signal for us to return to the amphitheatre.

On entering the amphitheatre I asked the president in what manner the school for female medical practitioners was supported. He told me it was supported entirely by the liberality of the present Viceroy, who, among other improvements he had made in Mussulman manners, had endeavoured to raise as much as possible the status of women—about as glaring an innovation as could possibly be imagined at the time of the Bey's arrival in Egypt.

"It was then," he continued, "almost an impossibility to find in the harem a princess who could sign her own name, or know one letter from another. Now, on the contrary, there are several who, if not educated on a par with the ladies of England and France, can at any rate pass muster in any intelligent society in the world. His highness has a great respect for English education, and an English governess is now always in the palace, for the purpose of teaching the children and superintending their education. He further intends having industrial schools for the children of the working classes, wherein they may be taught not only to read and write, but also the different

household duties necessary to make them fitting helpmates of the male portion of the Mussulman working classes, and that they might be introduced as servants into private families—a necessity in Cairo every day becoming greater; the richer portion of the community, in consequence of the suppression of the slave trade, being obliged to seek for hired labour to perform the household duties. But here a singular difficulty arises. The Cairene female children are exceedingly precocious, and although very intelligent, have a great dislike to work in private houses, looking forward rather to establish themselves in life as wives to the working men, than to attend on others.

The candidates having now taken their places, the examination again commenced. All passed in a satisfactory manner, some remarkably so, several having the military band playing the national air in their honour. About one-half passed examinations in foreign languages, most of them choosing French, a few Italian, but none English. Altogether the school was one not only of great interest, but which, to a certain degree, casts a considerable stain on the assumed superiority and civilisation of our own country.

ODD PAINS AND PENALTIES.



THE fool's-cap is obsolete, at least it is to be hoped so, for whatever we may think about the infliction of physical pain as a punishment (and to the majority of those who have the management of boys laid upon them, it appears not only legitimate but beneficial), there can be

little doubt that it is a mistake to employ ridicule for educational purposes. What, for example, could be more injudicious than the discipline of a lady who kept a first-class girls' school some ten years ago, and made her untidy pupils carry their boots slung round their necks when they went out?

Public shame is not reformatory, it only hardens. The child who was often advertised as a fool would soon accept the position, and act up to the character. It is the same with criminals: if you were to brand a thief on the forehead, a thief he must remain till the end of the chapter.

I am speaking, of course, of our own age and country; for upon no subject is it so rash to dogmatise as upon punishment. In the case of people who are degraded, so far as their finer feelings are concerned, by tyrannical institutions, an amount of exposure and obloquy which would ruin the moral sense of a freeman for ever, may merely rouse a wholesome sense of shame. All depends upon the

thickness of the skin; the turpentine blister which would flay a man, only acts as a gentle irritant upon a bullock.

Yet it is not so very long ago since punishments which were principally calculated to hold the offender up to ridicule were so rife in England, that one might almost suspect that they were intended to amuse the people, in the days when there were no comic periodicals, rather than to deter from the offence. For instance, few villages were without their cucking-stools, or ducking-stools, for scolds, one hundred and fifty years ago. Nay, the *Chelmsford Chronicle* for April 10th, 1801, contains the following paragraph:—

"Last week a woman, notorious for her vociferation, was indicted for a common scold at Kingston; and the facts being fully proved, she was sentenced to receive the old punishment of being ducked, which was accordingly executed upon her in the Thames by the proper officers, in a chair preserved in the town for that purpose; and as if to prove the justice of the court's sentence, on her return from the water's side she fell upon one of her acquaintance, without provocation, with tongue, tooth, and nail."

The drunkard's cloak was a barrel with holes in the top and sides, through which the intemperate man's head and arms were passed, and in this helpless condition he was obliged to walk through

the streets of the town, the sport of the idle boys. The Chinese have a similar punishment.

A seat in the stocks cannot have been pleasant for a proud and retiring disposition; but apart from the moral element, the severity of the punishment must have varied somewhat unduly with the time of year. On a fine but cloudy July day, a philosophic culprit, who had no personal enemies in his village, might have borne his sentence with considerable equanimity, solacing himself, perchance, by watching the fluctuations of a cricket match in progress on the green; while in a frosty February, with a keen north-east wind blowing, Riccabocca himself would have found the hour of his release a weary while in striking.

To stand in the pillory must have been an exceedingly humiliating as well as exasperating punishment. A man could not well be placed in a more ludicrous position than with his head and hands protruding through holes exactly fitting them, and his body hid away behind the planking. Flies might wander about his nose and ears; gnats might sting him without his being able to drive them off, save perchance by a hideous grimace, which would only dislodge the tormentors for an instant, while it added considerably to the grotesque absurdity of the culprit's appearance.

The severity of this punishment, as well as of the stocks, was, of course, dependent upon the amount of popular indignation excited by the offence. When this ran high, the wretched man's unprotected face was in the position of a live and sentient Aunt Sally's, an object for every description of missile; while in such a case as De Foe's, where sympathy was on the side of the sufferer, "public exposure became a public ovation."

Any one who has seen a "welsber" in the hands of a mob, can judge of the little mercy the poor wretch would get if he were placed in the pillory, to be pelted by those whom he had swindled. The pillory is not extinct, as some people suppose; it has only changed its form. Commit an offence against the law and get found out, or write a book and append your name to it, and you will soon discover that you may be exposed and morally pelted, quite as effectually as in the old days. And, on the whole, this is a good thing, for it does something towards rendering the system of fines a little more equal. For the fine which sorely taxes the resources of a poor man is no punishment at all to the rich one, who commits a precisely similar offence; but, as a rule, the rich man suffers more from seeing his name in the papers, because money makes us proud, and pride is an established "raw."

When a Cairo merchant is detected in using false weights and measures, or in adulterating his goods, he is placed against his own door-post, standing on tip-toe, and nailed by the ear to the wood-work. It is important that he should get free without

amputating the member, for that is the penalty for theft; and probably the smart tradesman would be horrified at having his little tricks confounded with vulgar inartistic stealing. For a second offence the thief loses his other ear; for a third, his nose. By-the-by, perhaps I am wrong to use the present tense, for these penalties may be obsolete at the present day. They may have a model gaol and a reformatory at Cairo by this time.

Naval and military punishments seem to have been very generally framed with the idea of rendering the offender ridiculous in the eyes of his comrades. Picketing was one of these; a man was so suspended by his wrists that his heel rested on a wooden peg driven into the ground. Riding the wooden horse was another; the back of this penal steed was very narrow, and weights attached to the rider's legs rendered his seat all the more painful. These punishments were not only humiliating and extremely severe, but they too often inflicted permanent injury on the sufferers, on which latter account they were abolished, and for many years the cat-o'-nine-tails ruled supreme; though the use of that instrument of torture was carried to an extent which excited dread and sympathy, instead of mirth.

The practice of stopping a sailor's grog for minor offences seems a funny punishment for grown men; it sounds so much like depriving a naughty child of its pudding.

The question of military punishments is by no means so simple a one as many people seem to suppose. At home, and in time of peace, indeed, fine and imprisonment will suffice to preserve discipline; but how can you imprison men during a campaign? It is a serious thing to have a swarm of armed men wandering about a country, and the lives and property of the civil population, even when hostile, must be protected by some rough-and-ready means. If you do not flog insubordinate or plundering soldiers in the field, you must put them to death. It is very barbarous; but everything connected with war must be shocking to humanitarian feelings. However, though severity is a sad necessity, there is no need to mix up mockery with it, for that is wanton cruelty.


The American institutions of riding the rail, an evident imitation of the wooden horse mentioned above, and tarring and feathering, show that the old admixture of cruelty and humour has not yet worked out of the Anglo-Saxon constitution. It must be owned that the man who invented the latter penalty was very ingenious; one wonders how the idea ever came into his head.

Really, it is very shocking to have such a feeling, I own, but supposing one disliked some person very much, and despised him to boot, would one be able to help laughing if one saw him all over feathers, like a Cochinchina fowl?

KITTY BLAKE; OR, CONNEMARA, CON AMORE.



"A GRIM UNGAINLY BOW."


 NE bitterly cold night in the February of 1872, I quitted my comfortable study for the purpose of ensconcing myself behind a white tie, and of encasing my person in those stereotyped sable garments which cry, "Open, sesame," at the portals of Society.

My friends, the Wilkins, were indulging in a fit of insanity, and the attack, which in the commencement promised to be of a somewhat mild form, gradually assumed graver symptoms, until it culminated in a tremendous ball. Vainly I pleaded a necessity for reading up a case with which the

eminent firm of Tozer and Bulsome had entrusted me. Vainly I declared to Wilkin, upon the honour of a man and a brother, that I was "out of that sort of thing;" that I had read that particular chapter in the book of Life clean through *ab ovo usque ad mala*, and that I was only good for the mahogany; he didn't or rather wouldn't see it, and with a sense of bitter injury at my heart, and an unmistakable sense of frost at the tip of my nose and my extremities generally, I pulled myself together, dressed hurriedly, and arrived at Harley Street in a humour the very reverse of amiable, and with the full determination of merely showing myself to Mrs. Wilkin, imbibing a glass or perhaps two of sherry, and getting back to resume the perusal of a novel.

L'homme propose.

The crush had not as yet been well turned on, so my ascent to the drawing-rooms was no very difficult task. Upon the lobby Mrs. Wilkin was standing, behind a huge bouquet which commanded the staircase like a great floral gun; and Wilkin was prowling in the immediate vicinity, with the air of a man who had succeeded in losing half-a-sovereign, and was engaged in looking for it as though he wanted it very badly indeed.

"Ah, Mr. Brookley! I'm so glad that *you* have come. Freddy told me you were doubtful—all clever men are, but *you* know I always believe in *you*, and I look to *your* aid to make this little affair go off well."

I groaned in spirit. This meant stopping until the candles were snuffed out—until the tallow-faced greengrocers were paid off—until the milkman arrived at the area railings, and until I should be jibed by disappointed cabbies as "the cove as was a-playin' the pianner."

"By the way, Brookley, there's a little Irish girl stopping here, a Miss Blake. Come, and I'll introduce you as a friend o' mine," observed Wilkin, dragging me, *bon gré, mal gré*, towards a mass of *tulle illusion* surmounted by a bunch of white flowers.

Now any Irish girls whom I had hitherto been fortunate enough to meet had, somehow or other, been always too much for me. If I was *blasé*, they were saucy. If I was *adagat*, they were sentimental. If I was learned, they were blissfully and gushingly ignorant. I had been invariably foiled, and my most skilful fencing went for nothing. I had not been able to score a palpable hit under any circumstances whatsoever.

I held back much after the fashion of a dog being led to corporal punishment through the medium of a collar and a string—bowed a grim ungainly bow, and proceeded to fiddle with the buttons of a pair of soiled, bulgy gloves, and to glare in every direction save that supposed to be occupied by Mrs. Wilkin's Hibernian guest.

At this juncture an attenuated, waxen-looking,

half-fed artist hung in chains, and clad in garments shining with grease and threadbare from age, proceeded to pound away upon the piano, aided and abetted by a pudgy man, who appeared to be blowing his whole person into a battered cornopean, and another conspirator, who discharged his duties to society and to Wilkin by dolefully scraping upon a violoncello.

"This is our quadrille," exclaimed a very sweet voice at my elbow, with just a touch of the brogue pervading it like a perfume, and a soft little hand placed itself confidently upon my arm. I had not asked her to dance—she had evidently taken it for granted.

Would I say that I never danced? that I had sprained my foot? or invent some patent and plausible excuse?

No! It would not be fair to mine hostess, so I sullenly resigned myself to my fate.

"This is my first visit to London," chirped Miss Blake.

"Oh, indeed!"

"I live in the wilds of Connemara."

"I wish you were there just now," was my inner thought.

"It's the wildest place on the face of the earth, and the loveliest—but won't you secure a *vis-à-vis*?"

I compounded with a pink-faced youth, who was in the talons of a tall, lean, vulture-like woman, to face me in the forthcoming melancholy ceremony, and to assist in carrying out its sad solemnities in all their funereal details.

"Have you ever visited Ireland, Mr. Brookley?" asked Miss Blake, at the conclusion of the first figure.

"I should think not. Ireland is a wretched mistake."

The moment the words escaped from my lips, I could have parted with a good deal of ready money to have been enabled to draw them back again. They were childish, rude, ungentleman-like, and I turned to her to apologise.

The hot flush was upon her cheek, the little hands were clenched until the gloves threatened to "burst up," and her flashing eyes met mine as she hotly retorted—

"You must be an English boor to say so."

The *pas seul* commenced, and, to use a stage phrase, Miss Blake "went on."

What a charming figure! What an elegant turn of the head! What grace in every movement!

I had committed a thrice accursed mistake, and I felt it. She went through the entire figure alone. She would not deign to take—to touch my outstretched hand. I had no words at will to cudgel into a proper form of apology, and I was bewildered by her beauty.

Lovely blue eyes, with sweeping blue-black lashes; a dainty little nose, with a rosebud mouth, and teeth like muffled diamonds; radiant brown hair in massive plaits—and her expression!

Ay de mi Alhama!

We did not speak during the quadrille. The pink-faced youth—confound his impudence—struck up an acquaintanceship with her, and treated the virture-looking woman badly. I felt inclined to hurt him at his partner, impale him upon her nose, and rush frantically from the house. The charming disdain with which I was treated by Miss Blake rendered me more miserable, and it was only when the laws of society compelled her, at the conclusion of the dance, to take my arm, in order to be conducted to the place from whence she came, that I ventured to exclaim—

“I implore of you to forgive me—I did not know what I was saying—I am worse than a boor. Hear me for one moment;” and in a few eager words I honestly revealed to her the irritated and inflamed condition of my mind, upon finding myself stranded in a scene so utterly at variance with my mood, and compelled, as it were, to drink the bitter cup to the uttermost dregs.

My pleading was full of the redeeming influence of earnestness, and I succeeded in achieving her forgiveness. She danced with me again and again. I saw the candles snuffed out, beheld the tall-faced greengrocers paid off, met the morning milk without flinching, and returned the playful banter of the cabbies in a mood so utterly different from that which I had pictured to myself a few short hours previously, that—

Pshaw! who can control the inner mechanism of the heart?

* * * * *

One glorious morning in August last found me seated beside the driver of one of Bianconi's long cars which travel between Westport and Clifden, and, as a consequence, through the heart of the wildest and most picturesque scenery in Connemara. I had, amongst other vows, registered one—that, so soon as circumstances would permit, I would undertake a pilgrimage to Boljolderun Hall—to the shrine of Miss Katherine, *alias* Kitty Blake.

It is unnecessary for me to state that I had *many* reasons to urge me to take this excursion, and that I had *one* in particular; in fact, my heart had, somehow or other, slipped from beneath my waistcoat—had travelled, in company with Miss Blake, to her mountain home; and it was with a view of recovering it, and of taking the young lady in question into the bargain, if my luck was up, that I was now perched high in air, behind a pair of “roaring gimlets,” and jogging along the roadway skirting that desolate but romantic inlet of the Atlantic, known as the Killerin.

In a happy moment I negotiated with the driver, Phil Dempsey, for possession of the box-seat, and almost ere we had quitted the town of Westport, I had come on close, if not confidential, terms with that worthy son of the whip.

Phil is a crooked, hard-featured, sententious little man, whose word is law, whose decision is an *ultimatum*. He knows every man, woman, and child along the road—their belongings, their respective histories, their hopes, and their fears. He carries small parcels for the “quality,” and a letter, if good cause is shown why it could not travel by the legitimate course of Her Majesty's Mail. He has all the Dublin news, and is regarded in the light of “a knowledgeable man.”

Instinctively I led up to the subject nearest to my heart.

“Me know the Blakes av Boljolderun? Begorra, I do thin, breed, seed, and generation. They're decent people av the rale ould stock. Miss Kitty travelled wud me a few weeks ago; she kem from Dublin, but she was over the wather beyant, in London. Sorra a much good that wud do her, or any wan else.”

I expressed a hope that she was looking well after her trip.

“Och, rosy an' well, shure enough; and why wudn't she? What wud thruble her? Her father thinks diamonds is too poor for her, and her mother wud burn the house av she riz her little finger. They'll not be thrubled wud her long; she's too dawny a crature for the boys to lave alone. I tuk a Mither Crane from Dublin over to the Hall last week, an', be me song, he was mighty tendher on her.”

This was alarming. I endeavoured to probe into the antecedents of this abominable person, but I could only ascertain, after a deal of circumlocution, that he was the possessor of “an iligant portmantle,” and that he was “a nice man, an' a nice-mannered man.”

“Good morning, Father James, good morning kindly.”

This was addressed to a Catholic clergyman, who was swinging along the road with a jaunty air, bespeaking the motion of one to whom a twenty-mile walk was no uncommon occurrence.

“That's wan o' the most knowledgeable min in this counthy, sir,” observed Dempsey, when we had proceeded a little distance; “but he was wanst bit intirely, cute as he is—an' there's the spot,” he added, pointing to a small patch of strand directly beneath us.

“This is how it kem about, sir.—Git up, ye bastes!” (addressing the horses), “don't let the gentleman see yez thrate me that way; git up.—Well, sir, Father James was on his bades and his bravery one winthry mornin', and he was prayin' away, whin a boy kem runnin' up the boreen cryin'

murther, an' that a man was wracked below on the rocks forninst ye, an' that he wasn't expected for to live, an' for Father James to run to him at wanst, for the love av Heaven! So Father James run the bades and the brevary into the pocket av his small-clothes, and away wud him to that very spot, sir, as nimble as a roe; an' shure enough, there was a poor sayfarin' man lyin' for dead on the say rack, an' not as much breath in him as wud cause the eye av a midge to wink.

"Have none of yez a tent av sperrits about yez," says Father James. "Have none av yez a tent av sperrits to put betune this poor man's shammy an' the cowl'd?" says Father James, risin' at it.

"Now, sir, they were all afeard to say 'Yes,' bekase he denounced potheen from the althar, an' if they wor to say 'Yes,' they'd be only kotched be the holy father. At last Biddy O'Donoghoe, who is always as bowld as brass, says—

"Arrah, where wud we get it, Father James? Maybe ye'd have a dhrop in that bottle that's stickin' out av yer coat-pocket."

"How dar' ye, ye owld faggot?" says Father James, but he pulled up shört, for shure enough, whin he was lavin' the house, he run it into his buzzum, thinkin' it might be wanted, an' forgot it intirely; so he lifted the poor sayfarin' man's head up, and gev him a scoop. Bedad, but it put life into him, sir!" cried Dempsey, giving the horses a tremendous cut, probably with a view to instilling a little life into them—"it put life into him, and he gev a great sigh.

"He wants another sup, yer riverance," sez wan.

"Let me hould the bottle, Father James," sez another.

"Whist, ye haythens!" says his riverance, houldin' up his hand, for the poor sayfarin' man was thryin' to spake, but the rattles was in his throat.

"Say wan word," sez Father James, "to say ye die a Christian an' a Catholic."

"The poor man thried, but he was that wake that he cudn't.

"Say wan little word to let me know that ye die a Catholic," says Father James.

"The sayfarin' man made a great struggle, and screeched, loud enough to be heard in Leenawn, 'Down wid the Pope!'—an' he died, sir, an' that's how Father James was bit intirely."

The car was pretty well crowded, and upon one side amongst the occupants was a sergeant of a militia regiment, proceeding to the depôt stationed at Galway. This gallant son of Mars was seated beside a very good-looking young girl, to whom he paid the most chivalrous and marked attention. Now it was the sergeant's habit, at intervals along the road, to bound gaily from the car, enter a *shebeen*, remain there a few minutes, and then re-

join the vehicle, betraying all the symptoms of having "laid on" a little refreshment during his temporary absence. His attentions to the young lady became more marked as we proceeded on our journey, and such exclamations as "Gelang ow o' that, sargint," "Lave me alone," "Single yer freedom, an' double yer distance," tended to prove that the gallant warrior's potations were carrying him beyond the laws of conventionalism. At length, after a playful but elephantine effort to snatch a kiss, the young lady appealed to the driver.

"Misther Dimpsey, I'd have ye to call to this young man—he's insultin' me, sir."

Thus appealed to, Mr. Dempsey quickly turned in his seat, and eycing the sergeant sternly, exclaimed—

"See here now, sargint, av ye don't lave that young woman alone, I'll take them three sthripes aff yer arm, an' lay them across yer back."

A roar of laughter from all the occupants of the vehicle followed this sally, in which the gallant sergeant joined with a heartiness and good-will that clearly demonstrated how keenly he enjoyed the observation, although it told against himself.

"Are ye expected at Boljolderun, sir?"

"Well—yes—oh, yes, certainly," I replied, somewhat confusedly.

"Yer an English gentleman, by yer way av talkin', sir?"

"Yes, I'm English."

"Maybe yer from London, sir?"

"I am."

"An' seen Miss Kitty over there. Whew!" Here he gave a prolonged whistle, which might have been intended for the horses, but I felt that it bore direct reference to myself.

"Troth, thin, you are expected, sir, an' there'll be bright eyes and red cheeks at the crass-roads whin we rache there, or I'm boccagh—Miss Kitty will be there, sir, in her pony-carriage."

I did not know whether to be amused or annoyed.

"You seem to be very well aware of Miss Blake's movenients, Mr. Dempsey."

"Arrah, didn't she tell me herself, the crayture. Didn't she say to me, says she, 'Dimpsey, take care av a very handsome young gentleman that's comin' to see me from London,' says she. 'Is it the gentleman that I posted all the letters to in Westport, miss?' 'Go ow o' that, Dimpsey,' says she. 'Blur-an'-agers! why didn't ye tell me ye wor Misther Brookley, and I'd have roused the griddle for ye, sir, an' no mistake.'"

I could have taken Phil Dempsey to my arms and cherished him.

"Begorra! there's the crass-roads, and there's Miss Kitty in her basket shandhradan like a pitaytec creel. Didn't I tell ye, sir, how it wud be?"

It is scarcely necessary to observe that I expe-

rienced that sinking sensation at the heart, which the immediate prospect of a meeting with the adored one now fails to create; that I pretended to be looking the other way, and not to have perceived her; that I bounded from my perch with the agility of an acrobat, and that I "tipped" Phil Dempsey to the utmost limit of his satisfaction.

"I tuk good care av him, miss," observed that worthy in a tone known as a pig's whisper, "but he was as wild as a young coult in me hands; but he's a nice man, an' a nice-mannered man, an' I wish yez-joy."

"Stupid creature! I never *can* understand him," said Kitty Blake, with a saucy toss of her head; "I'm afraid he has been taking the mountain dew as he came along."

At this crisis we were joined by Mr. Blake *père*, a splendid specimen of *paterfamilias*, who welcomed me to Connemara *con amore*; my portmanteau was placed in the basket-carriage, and Kitty

rattled away with it, leaving me to walk across the mountain to the Hall. And such a mountain, bare and bleak and precipitous; and for any step I made in advance I made two in the opposite direction; but I pushed bravely on, and sacrificed a brand-new pair of patent leather buttoned boots during the excruciating process. But what cared I for boots, or mountain, or physical anguish? Was there not love-light in the eye of Kitty Blake?—was I not approaching the Mecca of my hopes?

I remained a month at Boljolderun Hall, I held the stereotyped interview with Blake *père* in his study, which terminated most satisfactorily—

And—

Well, yes—

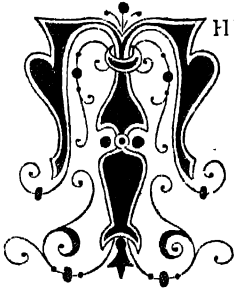
I am to return to Connemara before Valentine's Day, and claim the hand of the sweet little Irish girl who called me an English boor.

NUGENT ROBINSON.

FISH FOR CULTIVATION.

BY GREVILLE FENNELL.

IN TWO PARTS.—PART THE FIRST.



THIS is certainly a utilitarian age in which Science makes successful war upon the regions of Waste, and after converting its uncivilised prisoners to the cause of utility, looks around for fresh fields of conquest. To enumerate the victories of Science over the demon Waste, with his hosts of evil spirits, would carry us retrospectively into almost every branch of manufacture—to the root and fruit of most vegetable products, and over the whole body of the animal world. Many of these achievements, be it understood to the glory of Science, have been made and recorded on her roll, during the present century, with all those attendant and collateral benefits of which every fresh discovery is the parent. Amongst these the food of man, so essential to his health and welfare, has occupied its due mental share.

With the increase of civilisation and wealth the common necessities of life have risen in price, while the value of gold, which commands them, has decreased. Thus has the attention of several of our most eminent chemists and others been directed to the preservation of meat in distant countries, where it has hitherto been thrown aside as worthless after the hides and tallow of the beasts have been secured; and many tropical fruits, and, nearer home, many otherwise expensive vegetables have been grown and brought to the doors of

hungred multitudes by "benevolent steam:" all tending to reduce, or keep down, the cost of those articles of sustenance which would otherwise, from their scarcity, be out of reach.

It ought to be, therefore, with feelings akin to gratitude that we enter upon the inspection of Mr. Frank Buckland's Fish Museum, the importance of which is now practically acknowledged by the authorities at South Kensington, where it emphatically takes a post of honour of the highest order amongst the food products. It is a collection, indeed, in which no one can linger without being impressed that its end and aim is one both educational and philanthropic, tending to dispel the present almost universal ignorance of the nature and habits of fishes, and to inculcate as well the value of economic fish culture, not as an ephemeral and fashionable hobby, but a pursuit in the results of which the present community may profit, and future increasing generations may share. Its simple text, in a word, is to assist in substantially developing one of the most important of our national industries—the fisheries of this country; the object, in fact, being to find a substitute for butchers' meat; and, as all that skill and ingenuity can devise has been done to make the land yield any appreciably larger supply of meat food, to direct public attention to the presumed inexhaustible resources of the boundless deeps.

It is not here our intention to plunge into the profundity of ichthyology, and dredge from thence a mass of technical conglomerate, which would be

looked upon with more astonishment than attention; but to talk to our readers for but a little while upon what we find around us in this museum, as we have done so often to the boys at our elbows, creating rather than satisfying curiosity, and sending our listeners away, we should trust, eager and thirsting for more.

Perhaps the fish that is the most readily recognised as associated with our youth, rustic tackle, and retreats of rural liberty, is the perch. Here they may be seen of a size that seldom gladdened our eyes in childhood—fellows weighing 2 lbs. 2 oz.—but we have known one of 4 lbs. 4 oz. taken from Black Park, near Slough, and two of 4½ lbs. each in Norfolk. The perch, sailing along with his broad back-fin up like the mainsail of a man-of-war, has been compared to the high-admiral of fish—the legitimate naval power of fresh waters, as the pike is the pirate and tyrant. This spinous process is said to be only for challenge or defence, but experiments we have made tend to show that this, his dorsal fin, is necessary to his balance and progress in the water. Small perch may be kept for years in an aquarium, in which they will shortly become very tame, coming at a signal and taking their food from your fingers. They are an excellent edible fish, much prized by connoisseurs when about or above half a pound in weight.

The roach is perhaps the next to claim our notice, from its familiarity, being the delight of the metropolitan angler. The roach belongs to the carp family, and, like all its brethren, has its teeth in its throat. The largest fish here weighs only 2 lbs. 4 oz. There is one, however, at the Rye House, on the Lea, weighing 2 lbs. 9½ oz., which is the largest accredited roach known, despite the much greater weights given by writers upon angling. "Roach of 3 lbs. are spoken of in some books as common, and even individual fish of 5 lbs. as having been taken." These have doubtless been either rudd or chub, which are often strangely confounded by the casual observer.*

The dace are here of 15½ oz., a most unusual size, although a solitary individual has been accredited as attaining 1 lb. 2 oz., from the Colne. One notion concerning this fish is prevalent amongst professional fishermen—that it spawns twice a year.

Pike are well represented, one of 28 lbs. being pictured. A pike of 32½ lbs. was taken at Christchurch some years ago.

The chub is likewise conspicuous by its size; one here is 6 lbs. 2 oz.

The cast of a pond carp of 21½ lbs. leaves all others far behind. There are likewise tench shown of 5 lbs. The pond and river carp, although differing but little in appearance, are opposite in

their habits; the former being a most crafty fish, seldom taken with the angle, and then only a few hours in the year, during the hottest weather; the latter biting often freely at a bait for six months or more out of the twelve, and even in the winter.

Gudgeons do not appear to be well represented. This delicious fish has greatly fallen off in size and numbers in our rivers since the conversion of the latter into sewers. Their return to their native waters will doubtless be with the reformation of their homes. We once saw four gudgeons which weighed slightly over a pound, an enormous size for this fish. They were taken from the Itchen, at Winchester.

Nor is the bleak here, although the British bleak has during the last year excelled the largest known specimen in existence—one from Switzerland, in the British Museum, in which we had the honour to introduce his successful rival.

The enormous increase of silver bream since the contamination of some of our rivers is illustrated by bellows-shaped examples of 7 lbs. and over, from waters which have lost their trout but to make room for this worthless and slimy fish. The golden kind, or carp-bream, doubtless the sort alluded to by Chaucer in terms of eulogy, are excellent eating—the silver kinds detestable.

Rudd of 3 lbs., and barbel of nearly 12 lbs., make up this division of the museum.

The collections of juvenile living specimens and casts of the salmon family are most extensive, rich, and valuable, running as they do up from the egg to the adult fish of 70 lbs., following its career in all its wondrous, manifold, and mysterious changes, and settling once and for ever many doubts which have puzzled the world and naturalists for centuries.

We have scarcely space to speak of the curious history of those cousins-german to the salmon, the gwyniad, the vendace, the pollan, the powan, and the argentine. But we may not omit to state that they are figured or otherwise represented in the museum, and their peculiarities properly pointed out. The gillaroo trout is likewise prominently placed, and casts of the so-called gizzards which this fish possesses are shown. John Hunter, in his "Treatise on Digestion," remarks upon this peculiarity.

The largest trout in the collection is one taken in the Thames at Chertsey weir, of 14 lbs. 9 oz.; the next in size one of 14½ lbs.; and one from Lady Rodney's, at Alresford, of 14 lbs. Two from the river Lea at Broxbourne come next, 11½ lbs. and 11¼ lbs. respectively. There is, however, a Thames trout in a case at the Marlow Anglers' Inn, which is said to have weighed 15 lbs., taken in the weir of that town. "A yet larger one is alluded to by modern writers as being found dead in the Thames at Weybridge, weighing 23½ lbs.," but this was afterwards fully accounted for as a fish that was thrown

* "Book of the Roach." Longman and Co.

away after travelling some while up and down on the South-Western Railway beneath the seat of a first-class carriage, having been forgotten by a gentleman who had purchased it for dinner.

The bull-trout, there is no doubt, has acquired a very bad name, which does not improve as inquiries are made. Although often confounded with the sea trout, it ought not to be so for the sake of the latter, the flesh of which is red and full of flavour, while the bull-trout is kid-glove-like in colour and in taste insipid. Casts of the heads of these two fish are in the museum, by which they may also readily be determined from the salmon proper. The heads of salmon before spawning and after are likewise side by side.

There can be little doubt but that the increase of bull-trout, which besides its worthlessness as food is very destructive to the ova, fry, and larger progeny of the salmon and trout, is due to artificial causes obstructing the harmonious chain of nature. Attention has therefore been directed to its destruction in those rivers in which it has obtained too great a mastery—to an extent, indeed, in some which has resulted in the entire extermination of the salmon.

The *Salmonide* is a numerous family, and its genus comprises some twenty known varieties, of which the trout, the charr, the grayling, the smelt, the gwyniad, the vendace, the pollan, the powan, and the argentine—many names almost unknown to public fame—have a direct claim to relationship.

We make but little inquiry, when it is placed on the table before us, from whence the fish came, taking it for granted that salmon are all alike in

character and flavour; but there are “salmon and salmon,” those from certain rivers fetching throughout the whole season five shillings to seven and sixpence per pound, while their cousins of another stream may be procured for one-fourth the money. Indeed, as observed by Mr. Buckland, “there appears to be some doubt whether all the examples which have been taken on the British coasts are of one species, and the doubt becomes more warranted when we find that no less than eight of these fishes, not very unlike each other in size and shape, are said to be natives of the Mediterranean and the neighbouring ocean, any one of which may be mistaken for another by a casual observer. The doubt still remains whether more than one species may not have been obtained in England.”

The above paragraph is extremely suggestive, for if, for instance, it were found that the difficulties and disappointments which have beset the introduction of salmon into several of our rivers proceeded from some radical defect in the water—differing perhaps greatly from their native river—we should have arrived at an important solution of the cause of the failures which have waited upon the most expensive experiments in the Thames, etc. Or, to put it in more simple language, the Christchurch and Avon salmon are so rich and luscious, that one mouthful of this fish contains as much sapid flavour as a pound of another from certain rivers. We, in our earnest desire to get the best stock, obtain our ova from Hampshire and Dorset, and relying upon quality and excellence, hope everything, and reap nothing but annoyance and chagrin.

END OF PART THE FIRST.

A SUMMER MORNING.



THROUGH skies still dusky floats the
lark
Thus early carolling; and, hark,
From the pine-copse far down the
vale,
The Attic bird yet shrills her tale,
An agonising, mournful song,
Which chalk-bluffs all the night pro-
long.

The pearly orient opes a fold,
Its amber brightens into gold;
A radiance lights the upper blue,
Soon crimson quivering shafts strike through,
Round piled grey clouds fires swiftly run,
Blaze out, and straight upheaps the sun.
'Tis day: the perfumed breezes shake
Smile after smile from flow'r and lake,

Drop white rose-petals on the lawn,
Disperse mists round the elm-trees drawn;
Pensive amidst the Hours' young mirth,
Once more Aurora cheers the earth.

Out on the miserable wight
Who, city-pent, must dance all night!
Fashion, and then fatigue in turn,
Seal eyes which else might wisdom learn;
What marvel if false joys still please
Who love not simple charms like these!

And now my malison is said
On all who waste these morns in bed.
I turn—what's this my wonder greets?
Not dew-sprent leaves, but—pillow, sheets!
I couch-tied? I too slumber's thrall?
Yes—poet-like, I've dreamt it all!

M. G. WATKINS.

HESTER MORLEY'S PROMISE.

BY HESBA STRETTON,

AUTHOR OF "THE DOCTOR'S DILEMMA," ETC. ETC.

CHAPTER THE TWENTY-FIRST.

IMPOSSIBLE.

It was Robert who entered, having been found by his father, and sent to learn his fate. He was disquieted and troubled, and he stole forward with the stillness of a mother who fears to disturb the slumber of her child, or with the caution of a naturalist who snatches a glance at some rare wild denizen of the woods, which will take to flight at his approach. He had not seen Hester since the evening she had spent at Aston Court, that happy evening which had seemed to him an omen of good both to himself and John Morley. But how changed she was in her attitude of sorrowful languor! What lines of new care and anxiety were upon her beautiful face! He would give the whole world to comfort her and to shield her from every breath of adversity in the future. How should he let her know how much he loved her?

"Hester!" he whispered after awhile, in a low tone, but one which aroused her from her reverie and sent the colour flushing swiftly to her cheeks and forehead. She had not known that he was at home; and this was the first time she had met him since she had found her father's wife, a wretched and broken-hearted woman, in the streets. A peculiar tempest of emotion swept across her. She had pitied him with a very true, a very deep, a very tender compassion, and this pity still lived in her heart; but the sense of his sin had increased tenfold since Rose also had been cast directly upon her compassion and mercy. She knew he had repented of it, and his repentance had bound her to cover it with the same charity which she extended to Rose. But there was an expression upon his grave face which made her eyelids quiver, though she would not lower them, and sent a chilly dread of him shivering through her. He felt that it would be best to cast himself precipitately upon her agitation and tremor. He did not know what adverse shadow stood between them.

"Hester," he said, drawing near to her, but not daring to touch her hand, which hung motionless at her side, "my father has sent me here; I come here by his wish to tell you now what I have longed to tell you a thousand times. I love you, and have loved you from the first moment I saw you. Hush! Let me speak first, I beseech you. If you would only believe me, I have loved you from the moment when I first saw you as a little child, from the time you first let me hold you in my arms. It is very long ago; but, if it had not been for one false step, I should have asked you long before this to be my

wife. My father loves you already as his daughter. You have power over me, Hester; you can mould me to your will. With you beside me, I shall become whatever you wish to make me. It is my soul I commit to you; I implore you to lead me to all that is good and Christian. I love you most of all because I believe you will help me to work out salvation."

He had spoken with profound earnestness, and with long pauses between the sentences, as if to watch for some token from her. He knew that it was better to appeal to her religious sympathies rather than to expatiate on his own passion. He saw the colour fade away from her face, and be followed by a deadly paleness; but this was the only change. He did not know whether this immobility augured good or ill; but he resumed his suspended speech with a more pathetic passion.

"Do you hear me, Hester?" he asked; "I tell you it is my soul I commit to you, to do what you will with it. I know myself well. If I loved any other woman as I love you, she might ruin me body and soul, if she chose. But you would save me. Is there anything I can say which would prevail with you more than this? If you consent to be my wife, I can be a real Christian. I shall be sure that God has pardoned my sin—cast it, as you would say, like a stone into the depths of the sea, to be remembered against me no more for ever. I have asked this of Him, as a sign of His forgiveness. For God's sake, Hester, do not drive me to despair. Let me have God's love and yours."

He knew well that he must not kneel at her feet, nor take her hand in his; but he drew so near to her that he could almost whisper the words into her ear. Still she did not move or speak or raise her eyelid, which had sunk at last. He only felt, more than saw, that she was trembling a little.

"Ah!" he cried with a ring of bitterness and self-reproach in his voice, "I know what keeps you silent. But even she, if she were living, would bid you forgive and listen to me."

"Is she then not living?" asked Hester, her lips white and quivering, so that she could scarcely utter the question.

"I believe not," he answered hurriedly, "I have many reasons to believe it. The past can die now and be buried. Think what we could do for your father; how I could make atonement to the utmost. How rich we could make him—how happy yet among his books! In a little time he must come in contact with fresh troubles, perhaps disgrace. I

would shield him from every care; and he is, growing old. What will become of you when he is old and very poor, my darling? Let me make this atonement for his sake. Think of him."

"I do think of him," murmured Hester, "and for his sake I should say, 'No,' even if I loved you as you wish—if I loved you as much as you say you love me. You have never fairly looked at what you have done. You have never repented of your sin."

"Not repented!" echoed Robert.

yearn for home again, you returned to it. I will tell you who has borne the punishment—my father, who has never smiled since you sinned; and she, who has no home and no friends, who has been an outcast in the world, despised and broken-hearted. If you could see her now, would you dare to ask me to be your wife?"

To Hester the image of Rose was very present; but to Robert it was a memory of so many years past, and so unwelcome an intruder, that he could not summon it readily to his mind. As he had



"DO YOU SEE THE DOOR AND WINDOW OPPOSITE?"

"You do not know what repentance is," cried Hester, her grey eyes flashing with a light he had never seen in them. "Oh, if you had repented, you could never have asked me to be your wife. Me! Is it possible that you, or your father, could ever think of me? No. You have borne no punishment for your sin, and it is not in your nature to repent without punishment."

"Borne no punishment!" he repeated. "What then do you call the ten years of exile which banished me from my home?"

"They were years of pleasant travel in foreign lands," she answered. "Have you not told me of them? You had everything you could wish, and you enjoyed the time fully. When you began to

told Hester, he felt assured that she was dead, for such lost ones seldom live without giving some sign of their existence. But there was something in Hester's tone and face which made his heart die within him. It was not that she was indignant or impassioned. There was rather a tranquil yet intense pity for him, which placed her at an immeasurable height above him.

"Oh, Hetty," he cried, "little Hetty, is it quite impossible for me to win your love?"

"Why do you ask me?" she said in a troubled voice. "It is impossible; you must know it to be impossible. Oh, why did you ever think of such a thing? How could you ever think of it?"

They stood for a minute or two in silence, her

calm, compassionate eyes shining upon him from across the great gulf between him and her.

"Besides all this," said a voice in his inmost soul, "between us and you there is a great gulf fixed: so that they which would pass from hence to you cannot; neither can they pass to us that would come from thence."

"Hester," he cried again, "have pity upon me. This is my punishment indeed!"

"I am very sorry for you," answered her pitiful voice; "but you ought to have felt at first that it would be impossible. My father would rather go down, down to the very depths of poverty, than see me here. Good-bye. I can never come here again."

He had thrown himself upon a chair, and hidden his face from the steady reproachful compassion of her look; and she lingered for a minute looking sorrowfully at him, and around the room she should enter no more. This life of wealth and ease would have been very pleasant; even the brief snatches she had seen of it had been an enjoyment to her. She was growing a little weary of the long daily struggle, and the sordid cares of poverty. If things had been different, what a glory it would have been to John Morley to see his daughter the mistress of Aston Court! But it was impossible now.

Robert Waldron heard her murmur good-bye once more, but he did not raise his head. She lingered still, as if searching for some word to comfort him, but there was none which her lips could utter. He listened to her footfall across the floor to the glass doors opening upon the terrace, but he could not believe that she was going to leave him. He raised his head in time to catch a last glance of her pitying face, and her gesture of farewell, and then Hester was lost to him. He did not think of following her. Eleven years ago he had bartered, for the pleasures of sin for a season, the happiness he craved in vain to-day.

CHAPTER THE TWENTY-SECOND. DISAPPOINTMENT.

IT is impossible to describe the disappointment of Mr. Waldron when, after an hour's absence, he returned to the house, and found Robert alone and Hester gone. Robert told him of his rejection with a suppressed mournfulness, which troubled his father's heart more than the most vehement expressions of grief. Mr. Waldron felt a little mortified that Hester's conscience should be more sensitive than his own. If he, a deacon of the church, had considered his son's early error atoned for, and consigned to oblivion, why should this young girl set up her childish judgment against his? Yet in his heart of hearts he knew that she was right. Robert, even in the first shock and

agony of his disappointment, acknowledged the same. It was in truth a greater shock to him than it ought to have been; for, in spite of all his doubts and hesitations, there had really been a well-grounded assurance in his mind that Hester would not reject him, with all his advantages; but she had now done it in such a manner as to pluck up every root of hope. She had said it was impossible with such utter decision, blended with an inexpressible pity—a pity which he felt keenly could never grow into love—that he knew he must never again approach her, or address himself to her upon this subject. He loved her more passionately than before, but a dull despair had joined itself to his passion. Those pangs of punishment without which she had said he could not repent had already come upon him.

This state of mind, a novel one to Robert Waldron, might have proved salutary but for the intervention of his sister, who, while rejoicing that Hester had declined the honour offered to her, could not forgive her for its rejection. When Mr. Waldron announced to her that Hester had positively refused her brother, she could not refrain her tongue from a spiteful little speech, uttered in Robert's hearing.

"Don't talk to me about Hester Morley's scruples," she said; "I know her too well. It is because we have chosen a handsome boy for our pastor that she has said 'No' to Robert."

"What do you mean?" asked Mr. Waldron, whose chagrin was only second to his son's.

"I mean," she answered, "that Carl Bramwell is in love with her, and she with him. I have suspected it for some time, and he confessed it to me only the other evening. If we had invited David Scott to the church at Little Aston, Hester Morley would have been only too proud to accept Robert."

Neither Mr. Waldron nor Robert felt quite sure of this; yet the poisoned shaft entered into their hearts. Mr. Waldron's thoughts turned with regret to the day when, among the seventy students at the college, he had selected this polished and scholarly young man to become the successful rival of his son. He could not help being fond of Carl, and he had had in the beginning a scheme for furthering a love-match between him and his favourite, Hester. But that was before he had ever thought of her as his own possible future daughter, and now he could only be sorry that he had chosen him for the pastor of their little church.

As for Hester, she retraced her steps homewards, after her interview with Robert, in a strange mood of bewilderment and conflicting feelings. The fine old park, fresh clothed in the beauty of spring, lay around her; and she could scarcely realise the fact that she had just refused to become mistress of it, and of the great mansion belonging to it, which was

the grandest place she had ever seen. The larch-trees were fringed and tasseled with green leaflets, with a crimson cone here and there amongst them; and the noble, smooth-limbed beeches were white with their satin leaf-buds. The scent of violets hidden about the roots of the trees, and of cowslips nodding among the grass, was wafted past her upon the soft breeze. High overhead rose the sky, higher and serener than in winter, and a few cool grey clouds floated across it. How different was all this to the close street, and the gloomy walls, and the dusky windows of her home! Hester sighed heavily, and there was a multitude of regrets in her sigh. Alas! for the time that had gone by, and the ineffaceable sin which had been stamped upon it for ever!

She knew, by the deep trouble of her own heart, that she could have loved Robert Waldron; and for the sake of the love which might have been, a fine, sweet sense of tenderness softened her spirit towards him. The days came back to her vividly when she had loved him with the full-hearted ardour of a child; and if he had only remained good and true, so would she have loved him now. She began to see the nature of his punishment, and to feel something of its weight. She wished passionately that he had never seen her—but there, again, his own disobedience had wrought out its own consequences. If he had been true to his word, it was possible that he might never have met with her; it was certain that there would not have been the familiarity between them which had been brought about by their frequent meetings at Madame Lawson's. He must have been in love with her all that time, thought Hester, and her face crimsoned at the thought.

She had no one to tell of what had befallen her that morning—of the vision which had opened suddenly to her, but from which she had turned steadfastly away. It would be impossible to speak of it to her father, and still more so to Rose. She had not seen much of Annie lately, and this was not a secret to tell to a woman whose husband and brother shared every thought. So she was obliged to hide it away during the daytime, while she went about her work; and at night she pondered over it unhealthily, contrasting what was with what might have been.

It was impossible for Carl not to see upon Hester's face a deeper shadow than that which had rested upon it for some time before the evening, now several weeks ago, which they had spent together at Aston Court. He had not been so often at John Morley's house of late; but Grant told him that something was amiss with Hester, and that if she did not rally quickly she would have to leave home, which she had never left before, for change of air. He had said the same to Hester herself, and given her a great dread. For

how could she leave home now above all other times, when Rose was a pensioner upon her?

Carl argued with himself that it was his duty as a pastor to visit Hester, and he would do so as a pastor merely. He was a little petulant when Annie inquired where he was going, and how long he would be. His mind was so intently fixed upon the duty he was about to perform, that he knew nothing of what was passing around him, until he found himself in Hester's little sitting-room upstairs. It was the second time only that he had been permitted to penetrate to this room. He was excited by it, why he could scarcely tell. All here belonged to Hester—the books, the little desk, the work-basket—no hand but hers touched them. He caught a momentary glimpse of a white, mysterious face flitting past the dim casement in the old nursery opposite the window. It was not Hester's face, but that of the strange, unknown woman, of whom Grant had whispered his suspicion. Would Hester speak of her to him? for he was come as her pastor, her guide, and adviser, with more influence and authority than an ordinary friend.

Asking himself very anxiously this question, for in the answer to it lay the possibility of a very close intimacy between them, he turned round upon hearing the lifting of the latch, and met Hester face to face. They spoke to one another quietly; but in Hester's veins as well as Carl's there was running a rapid current of excitement, which would make it possible for him to move her either to laughter or tears. All his elaborately prepared speeches died away out of his memory; he could not recall a word he had intended to say as a pastor to this soul committed to his care. There fell a great silence upon them, and an uncertainty; yet a silence and uncertainty more dainty perhaps, in its fluttering embarrassment, than any eloquent assurance could have been. Hester's hand rested upon the table, and Carl saw it and nothing else. He was afraid that if he looked into her face he should never be able to fulfil his office.

"I have been thinking much of you lately," he said at last, speaking in short sentences instead of the rounded phrases he had intended to employ. "You were committed to my charge. I have a right to speak. You are in great sorrow. When I look down upon you in chapel, your face is pale and sad. You do not sing as you used to do. I know your life is lonely and very full of cares. But God has ordained it, and he is infinite love. We also love you—Annie, and Grant, and I. Why are you so cast down and disquieted? Is it anything you can tell to me? I might be able to help you. Is there nothing I can do for you?"

"Oh! I have been very miserable," said Hester, with a sharp accent of pain in her voice.

"There will come a change," answered Carl;

"though heaviness may endure for a night, joy cometh in the morning."

"The morning is very long in coming," she said, sighing mournfully.

"It may seem so," he continued, "it may even be so, but it is coming surely and steadily. You are weary now, till your heart faints within you, but it will not be for ever. Cannot you tell me your new trouble?"

"Yes," answered Hester, acting upon a sudden impulse to confide in him, though she had resolved to bear her burden alone. It was growing too heavy for her now, and her spirit was beginning to fail. "Yes, I will tell you, and you can help me. Do you see the door and window opposite? There is a little room there, and some weeks ago my father gave me his permission to let a poor woman come and live in it. She is very poor and very ill. Mr. Grant has seen her."

"He told me so," said Carl.

"He believed she was not likely to recover at first," continued Hester, "but she is getting better now—not so strong that she can ever go away, and yet not so ill that she is near death. What am I to do? She has no friend in the world except me—not a creature to care for her or help her. But we are so poor, and I am afraid sometimes that we shall be obliged to leave this house altogether; then what is to become of her?"

"You are meeting trouble half-way now," he answered cheerfully.

Hester drew closer to him, with a frightened face, and whispered her next few sentences.

"Hush! It is Rose Morley, my father's wife. You have heard of her? My father never sees her; she runs no risk of his seeing her. If I had not known she would be safe, I never dare have taken her in. But she was utterly homeless and friendless, and I brought her here to die, as we both thought. You know my father nearly killed Robert Waldron at our own door? Now we know she may perhaps live years and years: think what that means. Did I do right to take her in? Ought I to have turned her away into the world ill, even dying as we thought? Do you think my father will not be glad at the last when he comes to know?"

"God bless you, Hester," cried Carl, laying his hand upon hers, which still rested on the table, as

if she needed that support to keep her from trembling too greatly.

"You don't know what it is like to go from my father's presence to hers," resumed Hester. "Sometimes I wonder why God lets such things come to pass, and I have hard thoughts of Him. That is the worst of all. Don't be shocked with me, but after all, Rose does not seem so very wicked, nor Robert Waldron. She is very penitent—really, truly penitent, and bears her punishment well; but she is solitary and very sorrowful. Will you sometimes come to see her? You can come as a minister without any one being surprised; but you must not be too harsh to her. Will you help me by doing this for her?"

"Help you!" said Carl, "I would give my life for you."

He scarcely knew what he was saying, and she did not seem to notice it. Once more he saw the pale face behind the dim casement opposite. Hester also saw it, and the tears stood in her eyes.

"No one knows it but me, and now you," she said. "It has been too heavy a burden for me to bear alone. I am not very old yet, but I feel old, older than almost any one I know—a great deal older than Lawson's mother. I suppose it is the anxiety; and now I have more than ever. Mr. Grant said I must leave home; but how can I ever leave home? There was my father first, and now there is Rose as well. You must come and see her for yourself."

"We will go at once," he answered; yet he lingered, and looked into her face with the colour mounting upon his own, and an expression of utter anxiety coming across it. He had a word or two to say, which, left unspoken, would make this interview, sought by him, altogether unsatisfactory and incomplete. He hesitated and stammered, then reproached his coward courage, and spoke hastily.

"I am your pastor, your soul is committed to me. You said just now that Robert Waldron did not seem wicked—that was your own word—not wicked in your eyes. Do you know that he loves you?"

"Yes," she replied, the crimson flush mantling her cheeks as well as his, "he told me so; but Rose is living near me. What could I say to him? I could never, never become his wife."

"Thank God!" cried Carl.

END OF CHAPTER THE TWENTY-SECOND.

GREENWICH TIME.



EVER had Science a more pleasant retreat than Greenwich Observatory appears to be, this bright summer morning.

For all its pleasant aspect, however, the idea of exploring it is decidedly a formidable one. At the

very entrance gates, one feels suddenly convicted of the most abject ignorance. Here are mysterious metal pins fixed on the wall for the determination of British measurements, and the question at once arises, what have these to do with astronomy? Then there is a great clock-dial on which the

hours are reckoned from one to twenty-four, and which is popularly believed to be kept going by the sun.

Determined to clear the way as he goes on, the visitor makes these outer difficulties the subjects of his first inquiries on gaining admittance, and he discovers to his amazement that the very length of his trousers, and the cut of his coat, and the height of his hat have all been determined by measurements based upon the motions of the heavenly bodies.

A tailor's yard measure, it appears, bears a certain proportion to the length of a pendulum which, under specified conditions, beats accurate seconds of time, and seconds of time are determined by astronomical observation. If the tailor wishes to verify his measure, he has only to bring it to the Observatory gate, where he will find a standard absolutely accurate. As to the clock, it is an astronomer's clock, and astronomers know nothing of a.m.'s and p.m.'s; their calculations are sufficiently complicated without them. The notion that it is kept going by the sun is, it need hardly be said, a mere delusion.

On passing the outer portal of the Observatory, the visitor finds himself in an open courtyard, with an irregular pile of buildings on his left hand. Entering a low doorway in one of these, he is at once interested to discover that he is really at what may be considered the fountain-head of all our computations of time. The chief business of Greenwich, as all the world knows, is to tell us the time of day, and in this small and somewhat mean-looking apartment is the great telescope by which observations for this purpose are effected.

This instrument—the transit circle as it is technically called—is twelve feet in length, and its largest glass is eight inches in diameter. It is suspended by the middle between two massive stone buttresses in such a manner as to permit of its sweeping the sky in a straight line overhead, though it cannot be veered round to the right or left.

We have arrived, let us suppose, a little before noon; the sun is about to cross the meridian, and an observation is to be made. Shutters in the roof are thrown open, the great telescope is swung up and fixed in position, and an observer seats himself at the lower end of it. While we are waiting for the great luminary, let us take a peep through the instrument. All that can be seen is a number of vertical lines—technically called wires, though they are in reality so many pieces of cobweb—stretched across the field of observation at irregular distances. The centre one is the celebrated meridian of Greenwich, or at all events it represents it, and it is curious to reflect that from this centre line ships of all civilised nations, and in all parts of the known world, are reckoning their distances; that this little piece of cobweb is, practically, all that divides the world into eastern and western hemispheres.

While we are peering along the telescope, the drowsy tinkling of innumerable clocks is heard through the still summer air, and we begin to think that for once at least the sun is behind time. If not, then it seems plain that all the Greenwich clocks are wrong, a supposition which is quite at variance with all our traditional ideas of the place. On inquiry, it is gratifying to find that our faith in Greenwich timepieces is perfectly justified, and that it really is the sun that is behind time. The apparent motion of the sun, as everybody knows, is really the motion of the earth. Now the earth moves round the sun in a kind of oval pathway. When she is on either side of this oval her motions are accelerated, and the sun will cross the meridian before he is due. Just now, however, we are at one end of the oval, and the earth moves slowly, and, as we see, the sun is behind his time. It is clear, therefore, that if the Greenwich clocks were to be regulated according to the time at which the lord of day puts in an appearance at this little cobweb, they would require constant alteration. They are, however, set to record the average time of his transit. This never varies, and twelve o'clock "Greenwich mean time" is simply the mean or average time at which throughout the year the sun crosses the meridian.

Let the observer now resume his watch at the instrument. What he has to do is to record the precise instant at which the sun's edge or "limb," as astronomers express it, passes that central "wire." In any single observation, however, he may be a little at fault, and for the sake of greater accuracy, therefore, he will note the instant at which it passes over all the "wires," and then strike an average between them.

Slowly the sun creeps up to the first line, and the observer lightly taps a little spring attached to the telescope. The second "wire" is reached, and again the spring is tapped, and so on throughout the whole of the seven or nine webs employed in the observation.

This spring is connected with a telegraphic wire extending to a "chronograph" in a distant part of the building; and in order to understand the method of recording the observation, we will now follow the telegraphic signal, or, as imagination is even swifter than the telegraph, we will imagine that we have reached the "chronograph" first, and are there ready to receive the signals.

Accordingly we find ourselves in a queer little chamber, in which the most prominent object is a very beautiful specimen of a clock whose pendulum, instead of oscillating backwards and forwards, swings round in a circle, thus producing a motion perfectly uniform and unbroken. This clock is revolving the "chronograph," which consists of a cylinder around which a sheet of white paper has been strained. While we are watching this re-

volving barrel, we see the observer's signals come. A little steel point, which is travelling over the surface of the paper, is in electric communication with the spring attached to the great telescope; and every time the observer taps the spring, this little travelling point pricks into the paper, thus recording that the sun has just crossed a "wire." This in itself, however, would not be a record of the time of transit if it were not that another little steel point, which is in connection with a galvanic clock in another part of the building, has previously marked the sheet of paper into spaces representing precise seconds of time. On the completion of the observation the paper may be removed from the cylinder, and affords a permanent record of it.

Nothing perhaps, throughout the Observatory at Greenwich, is calculated to strike the visitor with greater astonishment than that galvanic clock to which reference has just been made. There is nothing very remarkable in its appearance, but the work it accomplishes renders it perhaps the most wonderful clock in the world, and certainly the most important one in England.

In the first place, as we have seen, it plays an important part in registering observations. Besides this it regulates several clocks within the Observatory, as well as the large one already referred to outside the gates; one at Greenwich Hospital Schools, another at the London Bridge Station of the South-Eastern Railway, another at the Post Office, St. Martin's-le-Grand, and another in Lombard Street. Once every day it telegraphs correct time to the great clock tower at Westminster; it drops the signal ball over the Observatory, another near Charing Cross, and one at Deal; it fires time guns at Shields and Newcastle, and every hour throughout the day it flashes out correct time to each of the railway companies. All this is accomplished as it were by the mere volition of the clock, and without any human interference whatever. Every morning it is corrected by an actual observation of a star; and thus, without being aware of it, do we every day start our trains, and make our appointments, and take our meals by the motions of the heavenly bodies as observed and recorded during the preceding night.

We now proceed to one of those curious little domes surmounting various parts of the Observatory. Here we find an instrument devoted entirely to the study of the moon. Observations of the moon are of immense importance to us as a nation of navigators, inasmuch as she affords the means of determining longitude at sea. Her motions however, from various causes, are of an extremely complicated nature, and it is very necessary that she shall be observed at all times, and under all circumstances. But with the transit circle, the instrument first noticed, it is plain that the moon could be observed only when she is crossing the

meridian, and not always then. Some five or six and twenty years ago, therefore, Sir George Airy, the present Astronomer Royal, designed the "Altazimuth," and since then the importance of Greenwich as a lunar observatory has been just about doubled.

With this instrument and the transit circle the Observatory might do all that, strictly speaking, comes within its province. The whole duty of Greenwich, as defined by Herschel, is "to furnish now, and in all future time, the best and most perfect data by which the laws of the lunar and planetary movements, as developed by theory, can be compared with observation." Mensurative astronomy for practical purposes is the great business of Greenwich.

The Great Equatorial telescope was mounted about sixteen years ago, under the direction and from the plans of the present Astronomer Royal. It is the largest instrument in the Observatory, and of its kind is one of the finest in the world. Its object glass, which is thirteen inches in diameter, and has a focal distance of eighteen feet, alone cost £1,200. The most curious feature in this telescope is the clockwork arrangement by which it follows any object under examination. It is used, as already intimated, chiefly for what may be called gazing purposes—such, for instance, as the scrutiny of the marvellous eruptions on the surface of the sun, or of the mountains of the moon, and it is often necessary to continue such observations for hours together. It is plain, however, that if an observer is examining the face of the sun, the motion of the earth will gradually bear him and his telescope eastward until the great luminary is lost to view. He will steadily creep out at the western side of the field. This is obviated by the operation of a clock driven by falling water. This powerful piece of mechanism is connected with the great iron framework supporting the telescope, and just as the earth creeps round from west to east, the telescope and all that pertains to it is borne round from east to west. Thus, so far as the motion of the earth is concerned, the sun, moon, or stars as seen through the Great Equatorial will appear to be perfectly stationary.

We have now seen all the more prominent features of Greenwich Observatory, though there yet remain innumerable objects of the utmost interest—rain gauges, anemometers, hygrometers, and thermometers, placed in all kinds of positions, and under all kinds of conditions. In one room are something like a couple of hundred Government chronometers, placed here for the purpose of being regulated, while in a building apart from the Astronomical Observatory is a Magnetic Observatory, established for the purpose of ascertaining and recording the various phenomena of the magnetic currents of the earth.

HOW HE WON HER.

BY COMPTON READE.

IN TWO CHAPTERS.—CHAPTER THE SECOND.



HAT evening, Ellen Stacey looks round in vain at the dinner-table for the man whom she loves. After the ladies have retired, she inquires of her aunt what has become of him.

"He has behaved badly," answers Lady Rockington; "indeed, Sir Charles might

have had him cashiered, but as it is, out of regard for his extreme youth, he is simply sent to his regiment at Luckra, and Sir Charles has appointed Major Rawlings to his post."

So he has left without one message, one word of farewell! The heart of Ellen Stacey swells within her. Is she angry? She does not know. Yes, she is very angry. And yet—she cannot believe him untrue. Perhaps he will write just one short letter, quite common-place, quite undemonstrative, but just one letter as a souvenir.

He never does write a syllable. He never even does send her a message. Then her face grows paler, so pale at last, that worldly old Lady Rockington prescribes cosmetics for external, tonics for internal application, but she steadily refuses both. She has to endure the pertinacious attentions of some half a dozen suitors, among whom she readily perceives that M'Duncan is the man selected for her by her uncle and aunt. To all she is polite, cold, and perhaps a trifle sarcastic. She has already given her heart, and even the suspicion of her lover's faithlessness cannot revoke that gift. As for these other men, they may be of sterling worth, but not to her.

At last Lady Rockington becomes indignant at her niece's reckless refusal of the various prizes in the matrimonial lottery. In a quiet underhand sort of way she puts pressure on the poor girl, by making her home so uncomfortable that an escape through the church door would appear the better alternative.

Then at the proper moment, at a hint from Lady Rockington, Mr. M'Duncan proposes. Ellen's great blue eyes meet his in pain, but her lips form a cold "You may ask Sir Charles," and the infatuated man believes himself happy.

The marriage is fixed for that day month. Short and sharp is the process of wooing in India. Edward Capel hears of the engagement, but he makes no sign. Indeed, just then he has another matter to occupy his thoughts.

The mutiny has broken out. The native regiment in which young Capel is cornet remains loyal,

but there is an ugly feeling of suspicion in the mess-room as to the future, for Asiatics may be friends to-day, foes to-morrow.

Soon, like wildfire, the intelligence of massacres and horrors comes from all quarters. Foozakahad is burnt to the ground, and Sir Charles with his family and suite are fugitives, guarded but inefficiently, and endeavouring by forced marches to reach the fort of Luckra.

With them follows Mr. M'Duncan, attentive, not to say tiresome. Ellen is beginning to detest the man. He is so obtrusive, so wearying, so unlike the brave young heart she cannot dismiss altogether from her memory. And yet somehow she shudders to think that she must in all likelihood meet him at Luckra—that she will meet him as the affianced of another. Better, perhaps, to fall by the sword of the cruel natives than that *that* should happen.

At last the towering fortress of Luckra comes in view. In hot haste their carriages dash within its protecting walls, and as they rest in the dark, dismal quarters allotted to them, they learn that the enemy is coming up in force, and that a battle is expected before the walls at daybreak.

"What of the —th Cavalry?" asks Ellen.

"They have mutinied at last, and killed all their officers except two, who escaped."

"Tell me—tell me who they are—their names."

"Let me think," responds the lady in a half-indifferent tone. "Major Prescott—I saw him just now—and a Cornet somebody."

"Capel?"

"Yes, that was the name. Major Prescott and this Mr. Capel are forming a troop of volunteer cavalry to aid the —th Europeans, who, with Captain Denver's troop of horse artillery, are our sole defenders."

Ellen shudders. So, after all, Edward Capel is to face death for her. Could she only see him! But, no. She cannot look him in the face and say, "I am false." So she lies down, and over-fatigue gives her sleep, from which she is only awakened by the thunder of cannon in the distance.

In a trice she is on the walls of the fort with the other ladies, and at her side in a moment is Mr. M'Duncan. At him she looks with scorn.

"I thought," she says, "Mr. M'Duncan, you were a good rider?"

"I am," he answers, flushing foolishly.

"Why are you not with Major Prescott?"

"My place, dearest, is by your side."

With a gesture of ineffable contempt, she answers—

"Leave me, if you please; I should prefer to witness what the *men* are daring for us defenceless women."

Abashed and confounded, he retires; and she, turning to an anxious mother, whose husband is in the *mêlée*, begs the loan of a telescope.

To the south of the Luckra fort stretches a vast sandy plain. The whole of the horizon in this direction is dark with the lines of the enemy, who are supposed to be some fifteen thousand strong. They have, providentially, no guns, but they number more than ten to one as compared with the resolute force which has advanced to meet them.

Through the clouds of smoke the movements of the troops are discernible. Evidently Captain Denver's guns are playing hotly upon the native ranks, and the whole efforts of the rebels are directed towards their capture. The European regiment are resisting repeated charges bravely enough, but they are surrounded, and, had the mutineers only adequate ammunition, would be cut to pieces. As it is, their hands are so full that they cannot help Captain Denver, who is in imminent peril. At this crisis the volunteer cavalry advance to the charge, with all the fury of Prince Rupert's Cavaliers. They are not soldiers, but they are the bravest of the brave, magnificent horsemen, and splendidly horsed. Their charge is miraculous; they drive back the hordes of Indians with terrific slaughter, and as they fall back, Captain Denver again opens fire on the retreating masses with telling precision.

Alas! this success has cost them dear, for Major Prescott has fallen, and the command of the brave troop of gentlemen now devolves on Edward Capel, as being the only cavalry officer.

To their relief, however, the enemy draw off. The Europeans are too distressed to follow in pursuit. Nor is Captain Denver inclined to move his guns, which are well placed for the defence of the fort. Of course, the volunteer cavalry remain to protect the artillery, which is indeed their one hope.

After the respite of about an hour, the mutineers appear to have rallied and reformed, for again they advance, and this time *en masse*. With accuracy and effect the guns are served upon them, so that ere they can reach within shot of Captain Denver they have suffered severely. Nevertheless, with the true instincts of fatalists, the rebels press forward, firing slowly but surely, till at last one cruel shot stretches poor Denver on the plain, and a wild cry goes up that the guns are lost.

Not so. With parched lips and eager eyes, the smoke having partially cleared away, Ellen Stacey beholds the charge of the volunteers. In front of them, waving high aloft his sabre, rides the form of a young man—a form she knows too well. It is a moment of breathless suspense. The Europeans are all but broken by the fierce onslaught of the

native regiments. Captain Denver's guns are served now by a sergeant. The battle is apparently lost. Yet, patience—the English gentlemen have yet to throw in their weight. At a hand-gallop they advance, led by a man whose martial ardour has infected each one of them. They are coming down upon the rebels, who even now can recognise the firm compressed features of men whom they have been accustomed to obey and respect. There is a cry among them as of fear, but with it a discharge of musketry, and the arm of the young officer in command falls helpless by his side. Ellen perceives this, and shrieks forth in a voice of agony, so that the women around can but learn how dear to her is that young brave now in peril. Onward, however, he rides undismayed. He is swordless, yet he leads the way into the mass of mutineers, who are fleeing right and left, till at length he falls, and, as the enemy are seen in full retreat, he is borne wounded to the rear.

An old man has been standing on the ramparts of the Luckra fort, by the side of Ellen Stacey.

He has good eyesight for his years, and by the aid of a strong glass has witnessed all. With a sigh he turns to her, dashing away a tear.

"Ellen," he says, "I have done wrong."

"You have, uncle," she sobs; "you have, indeed. My brave Edward!"

"What," asks he sharply, "have you chasséed M'Duncan? Hey?"

"Uncle, I can never marry a coward. I can never marry—Oh, perhaps *he* is dead!"

With emotion Sir Charles presses her hand.

"God grant," he murmurs, "that Edward Capel's life may be spared for you and for me."

"Really, Sir Charles," grumbles Lady Rockington, "I think it is quite wrong of you to permit Ellen to nurse Mr. Capel. Even in our present circumstances the *convénances* of good society ought to be observed. It is not proper."

"My good wife," replies the lieutenant-governor, "you married me for my money, and I don't see any reason why Capel should not marry my niece for her money."

"Her money, Sir Charles!"

"Yes, my dear. You will have your pension at my death, which will be ample for you. It is my intention, therefore, to make over my savings to my niece, on her marriage."

"My gracious, Sir Charles!"

"My dear," answers he, "you should never omit the *convénances* of polite society, even under present circumstances, which I am glad to say will improve, for Greathed is going down the country, and as Capel is well enough to be moved, we shall accept his escort, and I trust the young people will be married from our house in Surrey. As far as I'm concerned, I've had quite enough of India."

MEN WHO FACE DEATH.



"PLACED IN A BULLOCK-CART."

THE WAR CORRESPONDENT.

"**W**HAT a glorious life yours is—going everywhere, and seeing everything worth seeing!" This is a remark very frequently addressed to special correspondents, and thought by thousands of people who read accounts of gor-

geous pageants and stirring events. The remark is a natural one, and to a certain extent a true one, for it is perhaps the most enjoyable of all professions; but it is not all pleasure. A special correspondent has fatigue of no ordinary kind to go

through. He must be able to sit on a horse all day, and to write all night. He must be able to stand hardships of all descriptions, without breaking down either mentally or physically; and, above all, he must be able to face Death calmly. Few men see him oftener or nearer, and to few does he come in more rugged and unpleasant aspects. A soldier in battle faces Death, but he does so while himself under the influence of passion and excitement. A soldier is fighting for his country, and feels an active animosity against her and his foes. His blood is up. He grasps the rifle, which metes death among the enemy in the same form in which it threatens himself, and except just at the commencement of an engagement, confessedly the most trying time, he has little leisure for thought as to the danger he is running.

With a special correspondent it is far otherwise. If he thoroughly does his duty to the paper he represents, he must go under fire. In ninety-nine cases out of a hundred, it is impossible to see anything of fighting from a place of absolute safety. Indeed, as a general thing, it is necessary to be pretty close to the actual engagement, if it is to be described with any accuracy. It requires no ordinary nerve to face Death thus, inactive and uninterested in the work—to hear the howl of the shell and the whiz of the bullet all around and above, and to make observations and jot down notes calmly and coolly. If a special correspondent is alone, and the ground permits of it, he will, no doubt, place himself in the most sheltered position commanding a good view that he can hit upon; but often this is impossible. If he is attached to the staff of a general, for example, he will ride with that staff wherever it goes, and may fall by a bullet, as did Lieutenant-Colonel Pemberton, who represented a London paper. Or, again, in the most dangerous of all fighting—street-fighting, as in the case of the taking of Paris by the Versailles troops, he must push forward even with balls flying about.

But, after all, death in this form is not that which a correspondent most dreads. If it comes, it is suddenly, painlessly, and at least creditably; and he is inspired with the hope of furnishing the journal to which he is attached with better and more detailed information than that sent by his rivals. The death from which a special correspondent shrinks, but to which he is—unless formally permitted to accompany an army in the field—continually exposed, is death as a spy. To be shot in battle is a gentleman's fate; to be hung up by a village maire, or to be beaten to death by the mob of a great city, is the fate of a dog.

Travelling in this way, one is never free from the consciousness of impending danger. It is evident enough by your appearance that you are a stranger, and that alone is enough to provoke suspicion. You imagine that each passer-by looks

at you curiously; and you know that if any one of them chooses to question you, and takes it into his head to denounce you as a spy, what will come of it. You will in an instant be surrounded by furious men, whose voices will drown your protestations. A moment more, and you will be pressed upon and hustled. Then there is a brief struggle, a vision of furious faces and descending arms, and then, unless a gendarme or two arrive upon the scene and rescue you, in another minute you are lying upon the pavement, battered, insensible, probably dead. Such was nearly the fate of Mr. Forbes upon the Champs Elysées, on the day of the arrival of the Prussians in Paris; such was nearly the fate of Mr. Sala, just upon the commencement of the siege. Both escaped with life, but with both the escape was almost a miracle. These two, perhaps, were nearer this form of death than any other during the campaign; but there was scarcely a correspondent who was not more than once in imminent peril of this kind.

As a general thing, one is safe if one falls into the hands of the military. This, however, depends upon the circumstances and the situation. If you are arrested upon suspicion in a large town, you are safe. You will be taken to a guard-house, be examined in a regular way, be taken probably before the general in command, and released. This, however, might not be the case when men's blood is up and passion high. While the street-fighting was going on in the streets of Paris, had a soldier seized any man in plain clothes, and considered his conduct suspicious, he would probably have been shot then and there by order of the first subaltern who arrived upon the scene. As a rule, the higher the rank of the officer before whom you are brought, the more certain your safety. An officer of high rank shrinks from a responsibility which a junior will accept without hesitation. It is better to fall into the hands of a regiment than into those of a serjeant's party. As an instance of this, I may cite an adventure of my own in the Italian campaign, when for some hours I looked Death very closely in the face.

The Italian Government had peremptorily refused permission to all correspondents to accompany the troops; and I had accordingly attached myself to Garibaldi, who was operating on the shores of the Lago di Garda against the Austrians. We were at Salò when the news arrived, late at night, of the defeat of the Italian army at Custozza. The order was that we were to march back at once to Desenzano, a village on the lower end of the lake, some eight miles from Peschiera, and that we were to act there as the left wing of the regular army, opposing any attempt of the Austrians to take the offensive by advancing from Peschiera upon Brescia.

This was done next day; and we took up our position hourly expecting an attack. There was a

gap of some four or five miles between ourselves and the left of the regular army.

Believing that our advanced guard was so placed that no one could advance from Peschiera without having to fight his way—a mistake which nearly cost us our lives—I proposed to a friend with whom I shared a carriage, that we should start early the following morning for the hills over the Mincio, from which we should obtain a view of the battlefield of Custozza, and perhaps be able to glean some particulars from the peasants as to the fight.

We started at seven, passed out of the lines of the Garibaldians, drove to the foot of the hills, where we left our carriage and proceeded on foot. As we had expected, we obtained a fine view over the plain, but were rather startled on seeing how close we were to Peschiera. We walked some distance along the brow of the hills, gathered a good deal of information from the peasants, and could with our glasses see bodies of the Austrians moving on the plain, and could even hear the music of their bands. We then sent a peasant with orders to take the carriage to the foot of the hill upon which we were, and, having sat down for awhile, we went down and took our places. The driver asked me in his vile Brescian patois if he should go on, and I, misunderstanding him to say, "go back," assented. We were talking over what we had seen, and did not observe the direction he was taking us through the winding lanes, when, in a short time, we came upon two videttes of the cavalry regiment, the "Guides." They made no observation, and we passed on; but, knowing that we ought not to be entering the lines of the regular army, we now questioned the driver, and, discovering the mistake, ordered him to turn back.

Upon reaching the videttes, they rode up, pistol in hand, and said that we were their prisoners. We attempted to explain, but were briefly informed that we could explain to the serjeant.

Our horses' heads were again turned, and in a short time we reached the serjeants' post, where for the first time we learned why we had been arrested, and saw that our position was serious.

The videttes' report was as follows:—"We saw these men appear upon the top of the hill there. They had come up from beyond, evidently from Peschiera. They examined the whole country with their telescopes, and then went and concealed themselves in that clump of trees. After a time, they came down, and presently passed us in a carriage. We did not then arrest them; but when they had passed in, they turned back to return with the information they had obtained; we therefore arrested them."

"Spies from Peschiera, evidently," the serjeant said. "I will send them on at once to the village."

We again attempted to explain; but with the simple remark that it was plain that I was an

Austrian by my accent—my friend spoke no Italian—we were again sent on, this time under the guard of four soldiers and a corporal. In this imposing order we drove to a village about a mile distant. Here was a considerable body both of infantry and cavalry. We were left in our carriage for a minute or two, while the corporal made his reports, and, as the men gathered round us, the remarks as to our fate, and the brevity of time at which it awaited us, were the reverse of cheering.

Presently we were taken into a room in which some twelve or fifteen officers, principally infantry, were assembled. We were asked what we had to say in our defence; and I told my story, producing my passport as a voucher.

My statement was received with absolute incredulity. We were evidently Austrian officers; and as to the passport, why, it had not a single Italian visé upon it (which was true, for we had never been asked for them from the time we entered Italy). They were no doubt the property of some English gentlemen at Verona, from whom they had been taken for this purpose. As to our being spies, there could be no question of it.

"I suppose you all agree with me?" he asked, looking round. There was a general exclamation of assent. "And you agree with me that they may as well be finished with at once?" Another assent even more cordial than the last.

I was just going to attempt a last remonstrance, when, to my intense relief, a young captain of the Guides, who had not yet spoken, said, "Excuse me, major, but I don't think it would be quite regular to shoot these men now. I have no doubt that they are spies; still, as my men took them, I should be responsible, and it is quite possible that we may get some information from them; therefore, with your permission, I will myself take them to Goito. It will be all the same thing; but it will take all responsibility off my shoulders."

There was some discussion before the proposal was agreed to; but at last, to my intense relief, the cavalry man had his way.

We were now placed in a bullock-cart with some wounded Austrian prisoners, and another man who had also been taken as a spy, and whose reprieve, by the way, was a short one, for he was shot that evening. Some Italian wounded were put into our carriage, and we started, guarded by our escort of fifty infantry and as many cavalry.

I should mention that I had begged my court-martial to examine the driver, who could confirm our story; but was told that he was equally guilty with ourselves, and more deserved his fate, as he was an Italian, whereas we were Austrians.

The captain of Guides rode beside our cart, and entered freely into conversation with me. My first question was as to the reason of our having so strong an escort. He smiled in an uncomfortable

sort of way, and said, "Our route, as you are doubtless aware, runs for the next three miles parallel with the Mincio. The Austrian cavalry have been across twice this morning already, and they may make a dash again. I warn you that if they do I shall at once shoot you both."

I begged him to do nothing hastily; and if he did see the Austrians crossing, to wait at any rate until he saw that he was likely to get the worst of it before he did anything rash. He laughed, and remarked I was a cool hand.

Fortunately, I was well provided with cigars, which my captain assisted me to smoke; and we were soon chatting, to all appearances, comfortably. I talked to him about the Crimea, where I had first seen the Italian uniform; and by the time that three miles were passed, and very long they seemed to me, fortunately without interruption from the Austrians, he had, I think, come to the conclusion that my story was after all a true one. Here the camps of the Italian troops began. Seeing our escort pass along, numbers of the men who were loitering about came down, and asked our escort who we were. The reply was naturally "Spies," whereupon a perfect tumult arose. Imprecations and curses were hurled at us, and so threatening became the crowd, that it was a question for a time whether we should not be finally dragged from our escort, and hanged then and there. Our captain showed great firmness, and after a while we went on slowly through the furious crowd again; but it was a very bad ten minutes.

When we arrived at Goito, we were taken up to the general. The young officer of Guides went in first and made his report, and I saw by the general's face directly we entered that that report had been a favourable one, and that he had stated his own conviction that we were what we claimed to be.

Accordingly, after a few questions, and the examination of our passports and letters, we were released and ordered to return at once to Desenzano.

I need not describe that journey back: the cross-questioning and the suspicion with which we were regarded, and, more than all, the danger we ran of being shot by the Garibaldian sentries as, after midnight, we again, utterly weary and tired out, entered their lines.

I have looked Death in the face as closely, perhaps more closely, many times, than I did upon that occasion; but I do not know that I ever felt more profoundly uncomfortable, than when that little group of officers came to the conclusion to finish the affair at once.

There are other dangers to which special correspondents are exposed, besides those arising from the spy mania, and the risks of the battle-field. Taken as a whole, it would be difficult to find a worse lot than the camp followers of an army—the muleteers, baggage waggon drivers, sutlers, and others. These are the fellows who commit half the atrocities for which the troops get the credit. These are the men who follow like vultures in the train of an army, and strip the wounded and dead upon the battle-field. Civil law is for the time in abeyance; and the inhabitants of lonely houses which they plunder are only too glad to escape with their lives. From scoundrels of this kind, as a special correspondent follows an army, his risk is not slight. Human life is as nothing in the eyes of these scoundrels; and they know well enough that there is no one to make any inquiries about a missing man. It is as a protection against these that the "special" carries his revolver.

There are other dangers which a correspondent may have to face. He may be carried off by a barbarous foe, and be put to death, as Boulby was in China; and he may be sent upon an expedition among savage tribes, as was Stanley. These, however, were exceptional cases, upon which he can scarcely calculate; but the special correspondent knows that in the ordinary course of his vocation he will have to face Death from shot and shell; that he may be hanged as a spy, or beaten to death by the rabble; that he may fall in the medley of a street fight, or be wounded by the ruffians who hang about an army; or that he may go down from fever, or disease brought on by overwork, hardship, exposure, and bad food. The life of a special correspondent is indeed a fascinating one. He goes alike to great fêtes and to great battle-fields. He sees historical events which other men would give much to see; and he enjoys all the advantages of travel and change. His life is a pleasant one; but for all that, there are few men who look Death so closely in the face as he.

GRETCHEN.

BY M. M. ERCKMANN-CHATRIAN.

IT was about ten o'clock in the evening when the drinkers left the "Swan." Theodore followed with the rest, and went down the silent village. All the little windows were being closed, and the good housewives might be heard crying in the

darkness, as they closed their shutters, "Good night, Orchel! good night, Grédel, good night!"

Then all became silent, and Theodore was left alone in the dark street—gazing, listening, dreaming, whilst the countless stars twinkled overhead, and the trees rustled along the roadsides.

How many things does night reveal that escape the eye and the ear by day! Hark to that distant murmuring; look at that cat, half-seen, darting along there through the deep shadows. Listen to that bird, chirping so softly that the marten on the watch for it can scarcely hear it.

Theodore loved the night; he went a few paces, paused, turned round, and listened attentively. He recollected the words of the weaver, as he gazed up at the sky, "Keep thine heart with all diligence."

But when he looked once more at the earth, when he inhaled the sweet odours of autumn—the new-mown hay, the brown leaves of the trees—then he thought of Gretchen, pretty Gretchen, so blooming and fair, with her large eyes of liquid blue, ever lighted with the sweetest of smiles—her bright and merry laugh. How beautiful she then rose to his thoughts, and how fast his heart would beat! He could see her tripping from table to table, her arm, white as ivory, slightly raised as she poured the foaming liquor into the large shining mugs—her finely-shaped figure, her two plaits of fair hair hanging down to the edge of her short scarlet petticoat, her teeth shining like white enamel!

Gretchen had smiles for every one except M. Theodore; as soon as he entered she became serious, but at the same time such a tender expression stole over her large blue eyes, that the poor lad's heart overflowed with love. His emotion mastered him, and he murmured unintelligible words.

Theodore went on dreaming; he could see also old Réebstock, Gretchen's father, in his large grey periwig, with his open, good-natured countenance; then the smoky tavern, with its low rafters; the clock, with its porcelain face; the lamp hung from the ceiling, lighting up all the brown faces of the drinkers and the vine-dressers, half-hidden by their slouched hats, and glittering too on the little pewter mugs in their huge rough hands.

"There is life upon earth," he said to himself—"life, bright and full of love, joy, and comfort. Wine, delicious fruits, sweet odours, and Gretchen—that is what my life consists of, that is the sum of earthly bliss to me."

He trembled with emotion as he thought of the girl; he saw her so clearly in his mind's eye, that he might have marked every thread in her dress, every bead in her necklace, every change of expression in her rosy, dimpled smile.

Gretchen was in every object he saw, in every sound he heard; he looked at the stars, and Gretchen was there; he listened to the wind, and there he heard the voice of Gretchen; he thought of the peopled world, and there was Gretchen too. Ever there—listening to his thoughts and answering them. O Love, Love! What art thou? whence comest thou?

Thus Theodore went on in the starlight, by the

back of the village, skirting the coppice-wood, following the little paths edged with palings, and came out at last on the newly-mown meadow. Here he noticed the queer, irregularly-built cottages, with their outside staircases and worm-eaten banisters, their poultry yards, and their wide and far-projecting roofs. Dark, mysterious shadows brooded over all.

After making a long round, he found himself once more before Réebstock's house. He stopped behind the shed under Gretchen's window, and said to himself, looking at the little round aperture at the top of the shutter—

"She is there!"

There he stood, the moon throwing her pale light on his forehead, defining with a clear outline the hollow of his eyes, silvering his fair beard, and rippling over his negligent yet graceful and picturesque artist's dress. In his left hand he held his large felt hat, with its cocks' feathers sweeping the ground; and with his right he sent his heart to Gretchen in a kiss. Then, after remaining thus in silent contemplation for a quarter of an hour, he vaulted lightly over the low garden railings, entered the yard, and seeing on the right the tap-room door open, the barrel with its full red hoops looming in the darkness, the low bench, the hatchet with its curved handle, gleaming with a bluish light, the plane, the pincers, the cooper's tools, the screw of the wine-press lighted obliquely by the rays of the moon, he advanced slowly, inhaling the sourish smell of the fermenting hop and grape.

Not a sound was to be heard; from the skylight above streamed a calm, subdued light. He sat down on a barrel, and said—

"Ah, how pleasant it is here!"

He looked at the trellis to which the ivy was clinging, the little trough in the yard where the poultry were fed, the laundry door to the left; and it seemed to him that an inexpressible charm hovered over all this homely scene, because it was so often lighted by the presence of his Gretchen.

"Ah!" thought he, "if Gretchen would only come out for ever so short a time! If I could only see her just now, I should be able to say to her, 'Gretchen, I love thee!'"

He remained lost in these thoughts for about an hour, unable to make up his mind to go, when he heard a strange noise outside. Theodore raised his head to listen: it seemed like a smacking of lips after tasting the best of Johannisberg.

"What is that?" said the artist; and he glided cautiously into the court. There he heard the same noise again. Theodore looked this way and that, unable to discover the cause. At last, he drew aside the branches of a red-berried arbutus, and saw, at the foot of the outside paling, the idiot Kaspar Noss sitting on the grass, his legs stretched out, his shirt down about his shoulders, his old thread-

bare trousers held up on one side by a single brace, his old battered hat between his knees, and full of splendid grapes in huge bunches, which, no doubt, he had just stolen hard by. The fellow looked as jolly as Bacchus. His projecting forehead, his fat cheeks, and even his round ruddy nose seemed brimming over with sensuous satisfaction. It was he who was smacking his lips so loudly. He was lifting up whole bunches of grapes, and hanging them down into his vast, open mouth. His throat was dilating with delight, while he gave vent to his feelings by chuckling and cooing somewhat like a pigeon. Some tall nettles were bending towards him in the shadow, and thistles were standing up like sentinels at his feet.

"Oh, you scoundrel!" cried Theodore to him; "so this is the way you spend your nights?"

The idiot turned his head carelessly, his eyes twinkled merrily, and letting go the grapes from his mouth, he replied, "What! is that you, Theodore? Come and taste my grapes."

"Where did you get them?"

Kaspar indicated the place with his finger and said, "There; there are quantities down there."

"What! there? You stole them from Récb-stock's field?"

"Yes, Theodore," replied the other quite innocently.

"And what if I tell of you?"

"No fear of that!"

"Why?"

"You would have to say what time of the night it was you saw me;" and Kaspar leered and laughed in a most extraordinary way, and the artist, quickly preparing to get over the paling again, muttered, "Ah, the idiot's right!"

But as he was making off, Noss caught him by the coat-tails, crying out, "Stop, thief, stop! I arrest you! You have just stolen Gretchen's heart!"

Theodore suddenly turned pale.

"Let go!"

"No; sit you down."

"Noss, I beseech of you!"

"Eat some of my grapes."

"Listen. I shall call out."

"Give me some tobacco, Theodore, and I'll make Gretchen come out to you," said Noss in that strange, wild, persuasive voice so common amongst idiots. "She loves you; she thinks of no one in the world but you. Hush!" said he, raising his forefinger, "listen; she's dreaming in her little bed-room—she's saying, 'Theodore, my Theodore! Oh, how I love you!'"

Kaspar had let go Theodore's coat, but the latter had no longer any intention of running away; he listened eagerly to the promises of Noss.

"Oh, my good Kaspar! are you sure of what you are saying?" said he in a low trembling voice.

"And why not?" replied Noss. "Aren't you

the finest fellow in the village, and the best also? Don't you give me tobacco when I ask for it, and your old pipes as well? Oh, yes! she dreams of you every night. Come, sit down, and I'll make her come out."

Theodore sat down as though fascinated. Then the idiot offered him a bunch of grapes.

"Eat that," said he; "you have very often given me bread, so now it is my turn to make you a present."

And Theodore took a grape, out of good-nature; it was delicious, real Markobrunner.

Noss laughed; then joining his hands before his mouth, he uttered a guttural sound—the cry of the quail in the early morning. It was so natural that in the distant fields a quail was deceived by it, and, imagining that he saw daylight in the middle of the night, he gave three calls.

"What on earth are you doing?"

"I'm putting on the clock," said Noss merrily; "it is four o'clock about the brewery." Then he repeated the same cry several times, at long intervals, and the country round about seemed filled with strange confused murmurings.

"Leave me alone," said he to Theodore; "let me be; Gretchen will soon come out."

And leaning once more over the paling, Noss imitated the first crow of the cock, slow, solemn, and thick, as it is when the poor fellow is still hoarse with the night air. You could have fancied you saw Chanticleer shaking his feathers and quivering on his perch. Five or six hens came down the ladder of the fowl-house, and looked at the moon through the roof.

"Why, you rogue!" said Theodore, "whoever taught you such tricks?"

Kaspar Noss grinned, and answered softly, "Don't ask me any questions. I'm only a poor fool."

The fowls, becoming aware of their mistake, wanted to go to roost again; but Kaspar, whose spirits were up, drove them back, and made them cackle. Then, suddenly, he broke into an imitation of the song of the rising lark welcoming the dawn. He threw so much feeling into this performance that Theodore's eyes filled, and he exclaimed in his heart—

"Oh, Gretchen! Come to me, Gretchen, my love, my joy, my life! Gretchen, it's my heart that's singing to thee! It is thy Theodore calling."

He had returned to the yard, and, leaning against the wall with his head bent, he was lost in delicious dreams, whilst Noss was shaking forth his quivering notes.

Now Gretchen, somewhat surprised, had heard the quail whilst wrapped in slumber, and could scarcely believe it. She had heard the cock, and that also puzzled her; then the fowls, and her eyes opened. As there was no light shining through the shutter, she went back to bed; but when she heard the lark—when the rich and

tender notes struck upon her heart, she rose softly, saying—

"Yes, it is morning now."

She began to dress, and went to open the shutter. Theodore had heard her rising. He was trembling, and felt inclined to seek safety in flight; but when the shutter opened all his fearfulness vanished. He leaned towards the window, and, in spite of a little cry from the girl, seizing her hand, he exclaimed—

"Oh, Gretchen, Gretchen! I love you."

Scarcely had these words escaped him when his knees trembled beneath him. Gretchen, fluttering like a dove startled in her nest, her cheeks all suffused with happy blushes, whispered softly—

"Theodore, dear Theodore!"

She had no time to say more, for the shutter of M. Réebstock, which was just above her window, burst open, and a terrible oath—a regular German oath—smote the darkness, and was followed by these words—

"Who is there?"

They were all filled with consternation. Theodore and Gretchen separated in great fear. Noss, with his arms aloft, fled as fast as his legs could carry him, imitating the cries of the wild duck pursued through the water-reeds by a spaniel, his nasal voice re-echoing far in the remote distance. It was really most ludicrous; but Réebstock didn't seem to think so; therefore the artist, clapping his hat on again, vaulted over the palisade, and set off at a rapid pace through the orchard, whilst Gretchen, trembling, quickly closed her window and replaced the shutter.

"Ah, scoundrel!" cried Réebstock, extending his arms, "you shall answer for this, I can tell you that!" and the great house-dog, roused by the scrimmage, began to bark and rattle his chain.

Theodore went on running hither and thither until daylight, repeating, as if in a dream, "Gretchen, Gretchen, I love you!" Then he would add, "Theodore, dear Theodore!" and imagined he was the happiest fellow on earth.

About five o'clock he went home, and when he had laid himself down on his little bed, it occurred to him that old Réebstock had recognised him, and might for the future forbid him his house. This thought depressed him very much.

Next morning his misery had increased.

"Could any one be so unhappy as I?" he exclaimed. "Oh, old Réebstock will be in an awful passion. Perhaps I shall never again see Gretchen. If I could only see her once more! But I shall never dare to go down the street again."

And, still dwelling on these distressing thoughts, he went down-stairs and left the house, not caring whither he went, looking at the brewery in the distance, with its weathercock and signboard.

Nothing was changed; everything wore its

ordinary aspect. The herdsman was passing through the village, playing on his pipe, and followed by a large flock of goats and swine; the village lasses, with their pitchers, were trooping round the fountain, and Kaspar Noss lay sleeping with his back to the sun on the bench before the town hall.

Attracted by this pleasant picture, Theodore, with his portfolio under his arm, drew near. As he was passing the brewery, not daring to turn his head, he heard some one tapping loudly on the window-pane. He stopped in a great fright.

"Is any one calling me?" he asked himself.

The windows of the tap-room were open, and already several customers were seated at the table. Among them were red-faced old Alderman Weinland, with his large felt hat thrust on the back of his head, and his walking-stick of vine-wood resting between his knees; Zimmer, the tailor, in his grey gown, and his green cap tied over his ears, and his nose smutched with snuff; also Spitz, the barber, his beaming countenance surmounted by a little pyramid of hair, as is the old French fashion, talking in a loud voice, with his earthenware dish on the table by the bottle; and several more besides.

Old Berbel was putting the cans of curds in a row behind the stove, and long sunbeams, bright with their myriads of dancing motes, fell along the table and beneath the benches.

Theodore entered in no very easy frame of mind. Old Réebstock, in his brown coat and steel buttons, was sitting by the clock-case opposite the door. Gretchen was standing near the window with her eyes bent downwards. A lively conversation was going on. No one seemed to think that there was anything special on hand. But the moment when the artist appeared in the doorway, Réebstock, raising his arms towards him, cried—

"M. Theodore, do you love my daughter Gretchen?"

The young man turned quite pale. He opened his mouth, but could not get out a single word.

Then Réebstock, looking him full in the face, repeated—

"Do you love my daughter Gretchen?"

All the spectators were struck dumb with amazement; each, holding his glass in his hand, sat as if transfixed, gazing by turns at Theodore, Gretchen, and the landlord.

At last, Theodore, in a voice choked with emotion, said—

"Oh, yes! how I love her!"

He cast such an imploring look at Gretchen, that the girl of her own accord rushed across the room to him, and, throwing herself into his arms, burst into tears. Then the old brewer gave a loud laugh.

"Ha! ha! ha! Didn't I know that they were in love with each other!" said he. "You can't take me in quite so easily."

And all present, seeing him so well satisfied, exclaimed, "Ha! ha! Old Réebstock's pretty sharp; he knew all about it."

"Well," continued the brewer, "since you love her so much, take her, marry her; but you must stay and live with me in my house."

Then sitting down, he added gravely, "It's quite decided now; you shall be married in a fortnight."

To which all the company replied, "We shall come to the wedding in a fortnight."

Which in fact happened.

Well, Réebstock had grandsons and granddaughters, whom he used to dandle on his knee.

Afterwards, when he was quite old, he said to his son-in-law and daughter, "My children, you must remember one thing—if we are happy, we must thank Heaven for it. I heard the cock crowing before sunrise, and, as I was looking out of my window, I saw Gretchen unfastening her shutter. Then I felt inclined to be very angry, but Providence made me think better of it. 'Marry them first,' it whispered, 'since they love each other; you can rebuke them for it afterwards.'"

Theodore and Gretchen admired the wisdom of the old man, and thanked the Lord, who governs all things here below so well.

IN THE SPANISH MAIN.

A BALLAD.



SING, in rhymes, of the olden times,
When we fought the fleets of Spain,
How an English captain saved a maid
From our foes in the Spanish main.

In the days of Raleigh, Hawkins, and
Drake,

When our great queen ruled the state;
In the year since Christ our Lord was born,
Fifteen hundred eighty and eight.

When by Calais Roads and Gravelines
Our fleet Lord Howard led,
And broadsides broke from our hearts of oak
Till the Spanish galleons fled.

The stars were bright in the summer night,
And the waves rippled light on the shore,
As a boat put off from the war-ship's side,
And glided with muffled oar.

Right away they made for the bay,
And never a word they spoke,
Till they sent the keel sheer up on the strand,
With a long and a lusty stroke.

Then out on the strand, with naked brand,
Sprang the captain brave and true,
And after him then came two good men,
The bravest of all the crew.

Silent and slow through the shingles they go,
Through greensward and palms and pines;
Then they watch till the light of a taper bright
From a far-away casement shines.

"Ah! I see the sign, fair lady mine,"
Said the captain, whispering low;
"Now watch ye and wait, each trusty mate,
While I to the trysting go."

Up by the cedars and pines and palms,
Stealthily wends he along;
There is not a sound to be heard all around
But the nightingale's lonely song.

Who stands to-night by the casement light?
A stripling dainty and fair,
In doublet and hose, and a check of rose,
And flowing golden hair.

And who stands beneath, scarce daring to breathe,
With stalwart arms stretched wide?—
The youth swings light from the casement's height,
And stands by the captain's side.

Swift is their flight through the starry night;
But ere his mates they meet,
Hark! the bay of a hound, and along the ground
The rush of hurrying feet.

The flash of swords, and loud, wild words,
And armed men appear:
The stripling's limbs refuse to move,
He faints away with fear.

The drooping form with nervous arm
On his shoulder the captain throws,
And he and his men adown the glen
Fight inch by inch the foes.

At length they stand by the boat on the strand;
"In, mates!" the captain cries;
While from the boat a raking fire
Of deadly muskets flies.

A moment more upon the shore
The captain scornful stands—
Then springs to the boat, and soon afloat,
They leave the island sands.

I sing these rhymes of the olden times,
When we fought the fleets of Spain,
How an English captain saved a maid
From our foes in the Spanish main.—J. F. W.

HESTER MORLEY'S PROMISE.

BY HESBA STRETTON,

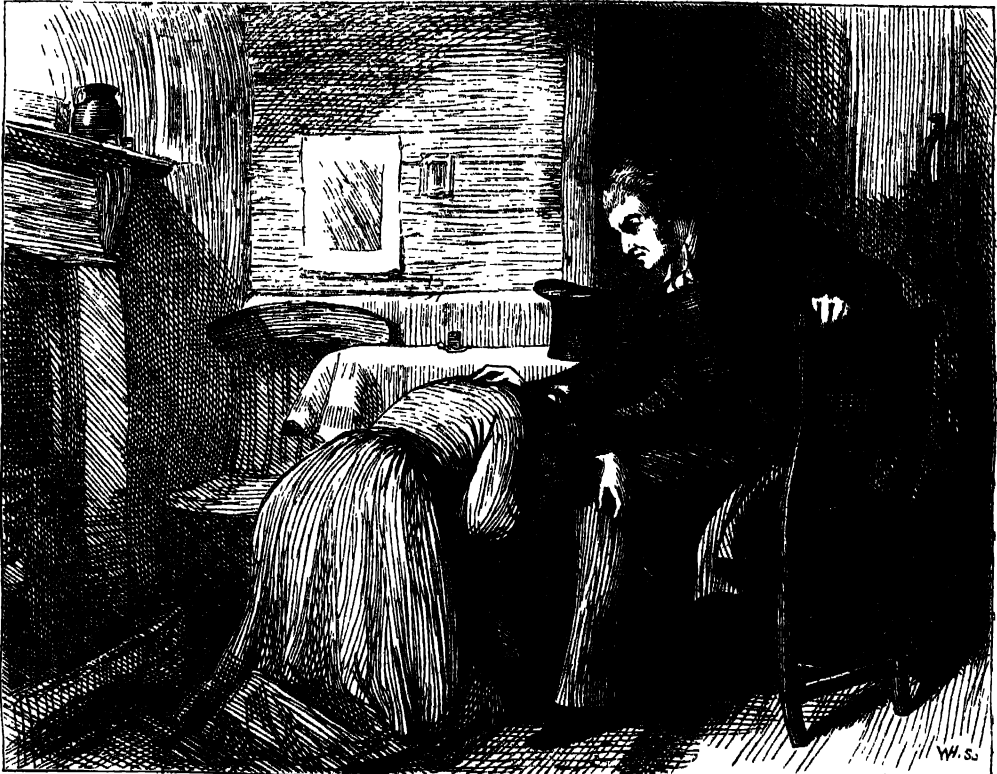
AUTHOR OF "THE DOCTOR'S DILEMMA," ETC. ETC.

CHAPTER THE TWENTY-THIRD.

ANOTHER HESTER.

CARL followed Hester down-stairs, and across the court, which was very dark, for the glass in the

which touched Carl's heart to the core. He clasped her emaciated hand in his own, and pressed it with a warmth and heartiness which he had not ventured to bestow upon Hester's.



"CROUCHING AT HIS FEET."

window of the old nursery was scarcely transparent, and shed but little light on the outside staircase leading up to it. Hester opened the door quietly, and Carl had time to see Rose before she was aware of their entrance. She was leaning languidly back in a cushioned and padded chair by the fire, the light of which fell upon her worn and colourless face, and the thin fair hair pushed back carelessly from it. Her eyes were shut, and the whole aspect of the thin wan woman was one of complete dejection, and of banishment from every gladness in life. At the sound of voices she sprang up, with a glance of terror which showed how she lived in hourly dread of discovery. There was something so forlorn in the peculiarity of her circumstances,

"Do you know who I am?" asked Rose, looking him searchingly in the face with her dim blue eyes.

"Hester has trusted me with all your history," he answered. "I am come to see you, and I shall come often, to make your life here less solitary. No one else knows; we alone have your secret."

"I am only afraid of two persons finding it out too soon," replied Rose drearily, "my husband and one other; you know who I mean. He was trying to find me, and I felt as if I could do nothing else but come here. Do you think he will ever guess that I am here?"

"Never!" replied Carl emphatically.

"Hester tells me he has never married," said

Rose, a glimmer of satisfaction dawning upon her face; "I am sorry for that. If he had a wife he would not be troubled for me. But even if he did not try to find me, I could not go away from here. I cannot tell you what it is to think of leaving my home again; it is the only home I have, and Hester has promised I shall stay in it. It is more lonely than you can think; I am here, day and night, all alone, yet I would not go away for the world. I know my husband will forgive me some time, and be very sorry for me. I have often wished for some clergyman to talk to; for there are hundreds and thousands of questions keep coming into my poor head. I am not very clever, but perhaps you will answer some of these questions. Only you are a very young man, and you do not know much of life yet."

"Perhaps not," answered Carl gently; "but I know something of God."

Rose looked again steadily into his face, which wore an air of grave yet tender reverence even for her, a lost and wretched woman. Her heart was sick for some communion with one who had authority to speak of God, that heart-sickness which forms the secret strength of the priesthood in every age; and Carl, with his noble and thoughtful face, and his keen eyes bent with unspoken compassion upon her, seemed like a messenger come from God to her.

"I think I could speak better to you alone," said Rose.

Hester left them at once, and Carl, taking the only other chair which was in the little room, seated himself opposite Rose. She did not seem in any hurry to begin the conversation with him, but sat playing listlessly with her work which lay upon her lap; and he waited patiently for her to ask him some of the questions which troubled her.

"I have something to tell you that I dare not tell Hester," she said at last, her head drooping and her cheeks flushing a little; "she is like an angel almost, as innocent and ignorant. Sometimes I wish she was more like other girls; but she has always been quite alone, and grown up very strange. Oh! she is strange, is Hetty. I suppose I have done something towards it. Are you a friend of hers?"

"To be sure I am," answered Carl, smiling to himself; for she was not looking towards him, but gazing into the fire before her.

"Then perhaps you will know why I feel a very, very long way off from her," she said wistfully; "I love her more than I can tell, but she is as far away as if she were one of the stars. I can talk to you better than to her. I am afraid to tell her all my secret; yet why I do not know. Why should I be afraid of little Hetty?"

Carl looked again at her with a glance of ineffable pity. He could have told her that it was

her own sense of sin and shame which raised the barrier between her and Hester, but he did not. She seemed to catch his meaning from his silence, for she bowed her head, and burst into an agony of weeping.

"Oh! I know, I know," she sobbed, when she had ceased to weep; "but how then can I come before God? How can I help being horribly afraid of him?"

"Because God knows all your life," answered Carl tenderly, "and because his perfect holiness may consist with perfect mercy. We can only know in part, and forgive in part; but he has that complete knowledge of you, that you can have no thought hidden from him. Therefore you can go to him without drawing back, as you do from Hester."

"Do you think my husband will ever forgive me?" she asked.

"Only in part," said Carl, with deeper tenderness; "you must not hope for more. In this, as in everything else, man can only copy God very imperfectly. He will forgive you, it may be, in the hour of his death or yours, but not before. There is a reproach and dishonour which cannot be wiped away."

"But what is to become of me?" cried Rose, wringing her hands in a paroxysm of grief and despair; "how am I to lead this horrible life? It would be better for me to die—a hundred times better. Oh! you don't know what it is."

"Is it much happier for Hester, or your husband?" asked Carl reproachfully, "and they have been guilty of no sin."

"No," she exclaimed, turning quickly upon him; "and why does God let them suffer for my folly? Why did not God strike me dead, before I brought all this evil upon them? They have done no wrong, yet they are as miserable as I am."

"I spoke rashly," he said; "they are far happier than you. Hester at least is not unhappy in herself. There is no anguish like the memory of sin."

"That is true," she moaned; "I could bear anything better than that. I remember the time when I did not think myself a sinner. I remember telling Miss Waldron I kept all God's commandments. I was a poor, silly young thing then; I know better now."

There was a painfully pathetic mournfulness in this confession, which Rose made in an abstracted and dreamy tone, as if she had lost herself in the recollection of those innocent days.

Carl did not break in upon her thoughts; and the silence prolonged itself for several minutes.

"Do you know I have not quite made up my mind about telling you my secret," she said, when she roused herself to the consciousness of his presence. "I am afraid you will tell Hester, and

she will be farther off from me than ever. Do you think she will?"

"Tell me what it is," he answered gently; "and if I think she will, I will keep it from her."

"Oh!" she said, shrinking and trembling, while her face burned, "I have never told anybody who knows my history. They believe that I am a widow—everybody believed it—and that my little girl is an orphan. I called her Hester because—ah! I scarcely know why—Hester was the name I loved best; and I fancied somehow that she would come home to live with the first Hester. But now I dare not tell her."

"Where is your little girl?" asked Carl in a quiet and soothing voice.

"She was born in France," she answered; "I left Falaise, and went on and on through the country, not caring much, till I came to a little country convent, where there was a hospital for the country people—for the old, and sick children, something like the workhouses here, but not quite the same, because the sisters were the nurses; and there my little child was born. They did not want to christen her Hester, but they did at last, only they added Maria to it—Hester Maria—and they kept us there for six months. It was a very strange six months. I felt happier than I did before, and thought oftener of God, and his Son Jesus Christ. But I never told the sisters about myself; and after a while I knew I must do something to get my own living and the baby's. They got me a place as lady's maid in a Catholic family, and I had to leave my baby at the convent, and go away to Paris. Then I changed into an English family; and after six years I agreed to come back to England. I saw him—you know whom—once in Paris, but he did not see me, and I felt quite faint. If I had fainted he would have known who it was. So I came back to England."

"And your little girl?" asked Carl again.

"I had scarcely ever seen her," continued Rose's wailing voice, "but then I paid the good sisters for her board, and brought her back with me. She is a pretty little thing, but so quiet—so sage and still. She is like the sisters themselves; you would say she never played or laughed. I was obliged to put her into a school in London, and she could never have any holidays, for I had no home, and neither of us has a single friend in the world. She has never been away from that school for four years, and it is in a close street in London. She does not know what it is to love a father or mother like other little children. Oh! why did not God strike me dead? And now her last half-year has not been paid, and they will be cruel to my poor little Hester. I know what many schools are. They won't send her out into the streets, but they will make a drudge and a victim of her, to bear everybody's faults. Oh! I know how my little one

is suffering; but if God would only let me die, I am sure my husband would let Hester have her to live with her. Don't you think he would? He is a good man."

She buried her face in her hands, and broke again into a passion of tears. Carl thought for some minutes before attempting to offer her any consolation, and then he laid his hand softly upon her arm.

"Take comfort," he said, "I have formed a plan for your little girl, your Hester. She shall be mine. I will adopt her as my own until Hester herself can take charge of her."

"What is it you said?" asked Rose incredulously, and raising her tearful face to look at him.

"I will regard your little Hester as my own child," he answered; "I am rich enough for that. You need not trouble yourself any more about her. She shall be my charge."

"But you live here in Little Aston," she said, her face still clouded with incredulity and anxiety, "you cannot bring her here. I would rather she died, poor little thing, than ever see her father. She believes her father is dead, and in heaven—in heaven! Oh! I could not bear that she should ever know different. No, no, you cannot take charge of my little Hester, living here."

"Has she been happy where she is?" asked Carl.

"Oh! as happy as a little creature can be at school," said Rose, "but not as happy as she was with the good sisters. She has been there four years, and she knows no other kind of life. Only, if her bills are not paid, I know what sort of taunts she will have to bear, and that makes me suffer. I earn all the money I can by sewing, but I do not quite keep myself, and how can I get enough to pay for her? And she wants new frocks and other clothes, and shoes. What can I do? Whatever can I do?"

She dropped her face again helplessly upon her hands, while Carl deliberated once more.

There seemed nothing he could do, except engage to pay the expenses of the forlorn, deserted little child, in her dreary school-home in London. It was true that he could not bring her to Little Aston, as in the first moment he had thought of doing, where she could be placed under Annie's care. The secret was not his own; it belonged to the poor mother, who dreaded that the child should ever discover she had a father not in heaven. He did not even know whether it would be well to confide it to Hester; it would only add to her cares and difficulties. There was nothing to be done at present but to pay the debts already accumulated, and to leave the child at school, until he could see more clearly how he could make her life happier.

"I suppose we must leave her where she is," he said, as soon as he had come to this conclusion;

"but if you will give me the address I will write to-night, and ask the mistress of the school to send her account to me. You shall see it, and tell me if it is correct, and then you need feel no further uneasiness. I came in order to see if I could give you any comfort, any help. I am very glad to do this."

He spoke in a tone of such heart-felt sympathy, that Rose could not doubt his sincerity. She flung herself on her knees before him, and when he would not suffer her to kiss his hands, she sank down on the ground, crouching at his feet. He raised her up, spoke a few kindly words to her, and then, seeing her agitation and trouble to be very great, he left her and groped his way across the dark court into John Morley's house.

He did not see Hester again alone, for it was tea-time, and she was making tea for her father in his gloomy room, which, for this one hour of the day, put on a more home-like aspect than at any other. Carl sat down with them, and lost no movement or glance of Hester's, though his eyes were seldom turned directly to her. A strong current of happiness ran through his whole being. There was a mutual secret and a mutual sympathy between them, which must draw them very closely together in the future. John Morley asked him some indifferent question with regard to the poor woman he had been to visit, and he answered at random, his thoughts being fixed upon Hester. A gleam of light, strangely sweet and sad, flashed across John Morley's grey face, as he looked up at hearing Carl's irrelevant answer, and saw him gazing at his daughter. There was no one else in Hester's little world, thought the father, whom she could marry.

A little later John Morley accompanied Carl to chapel, where there was a meeting, and walking side by side with him, put his arm affectionately through his—a rare token of friendship from a man like him.

CHAPTER THE TWENTY-FOURTH.

HETERODOXY.

THERE were, however, rocks ahead in the hitherto smooth track of Carl's life-voyage. He had been sensitive enough to feel an immediate change in the atmosphere of Aston Court, and he had attributed it to his own confession to Miss Waldron; but there was also rankling in Mr. Waldron's mind the suspicion, introduced to it by his daughter, that Carl had dealt unfairly with regard to Hester and Robert. It happened, naturally, that he visited John Morley's house more than usual after his first interview with Rose, and his church was at no loss to account for it. Many a hint and allusion among the chapel people as to their young minister soon needing a

house of his own, made Mr. Waldron wince sharply. He was convinced that Robert would never stay in the neighbourhood after Hester had become Carl's wife. Without intention, he grew cool towards him, and Carl was not slow in withdrawing from his former familiar intimacy with his patron.

But there was a more perilous rock ahead than the mere darkening of the great man's countenance. It will be difficult to give Miss Waldron credit for conscientiousness in what is about to be narrated, but it is necessary to do so. Like the best and wisest amongst us, she was self-deceived at times, and saw through the fog of her own feelings. She believed herself to possess a keen eye for the faintest speck of heresy. To her purged sight it was needful that the sun itself should shine without spots. Now, like most young men of his age and genius, Carl's creed was not as firmly rooted and as artistically pruned as that of elder men; though he had gone diligently through a system of divinity, and knew very well how to argue for the peculiar tenets of their sect. But Miss Waldron discovered traces of suspicious latitudinarianism, which was not difficult to account for. Carl had German proclivities and relations, for he had been positively named after a German friend and fellow-student of his father's, and he was inoculated with German errors. It was her painful duty to the church to point out these erroneous notions. If rationalism found its way among the simple flock at Little Aston, she and her father alone would be responsible.

Amongst the churches, no burr sticks so close as the charge of heterodoxy. Sunday after Sunday she watched with a sharp eye for Carl's German predilections, and hinted her doubts and objections to her father, till even he, shrewd though he was, began to listen with lessening confidence to his eloquent sermons. Though liberal to an extreme in politics, Mr. Waldron was a strong conservative in religion, and admitted but few to the franchise of the New Jerusalem. He took the alarm himself, and the suspicion spread through the church like a slow fever. It was found out that the younger members of the congregation were asking questions which it was difficult if not impossible to answer. The fledglings, who had nestled contentedly under the safe wings of old Mr. Watson, were beginning to stir and agitate their own frail pinions. The mere phrase "German rationalism" was a bug-bear to the church, though they knew no more of it than of the differential calculus. There was, perhaps, just foothold for the charge of heterodoxy. Carl was at the time crossing the debateable ground which every thoughtful spirit has to traverse, and he needed large and charitable sympathy from his fellow-pilgrims. Many a soul is driven from the fold by the foolish sparrings of its fellows.

It was one Sunday evening, after Carl had

seemed to forget the beaten tracks, well trodden by his predecessors, and ventured upon newer and fresher pasturage for his flock, that Miss Waldron spoke out openly.

"I begin to think," she said solemnly, "that we should have done better for the church by choosing David Scott. I am sure Carl Bramwell's doctrine is not sound."

"His sermon to-night was very fine," said Mr. Waldron in a tone of regret.

"But dangerous—the more dangerous for its eloquence," continued Miss Waldron. "He preached works without faith."

"The other day you said he preached faith without works," observed Robert, with a sneer, partly at his sister and partly at Carl.

"I am sure I don't know what he believes," she answered peevishly; "he teaches first one thing, and then the opposite. All I know is that the females in my classes are quite unsettled. I have already detected the Socinian heresy in one or two of them."

"My dear," suggested Mr. Waldron, "he cannot be heterodox in every direction."

"I don't know that," she argued; "when an intellect is once perverted, it runs greedily in the way of any error. But I am in great distress of mind; and I am sure we ought to call a church-meeting about it. An awful responsibility rests on us; in one sense the church is in our keeping."

Mr. Waldron mused a little while with an expression of embarrassment and pain upon his face. His daughter had reached this point by little and little, with here a word and there a word, until he was really disturbed about the church, though he felt an inward shame of his disquietude. The coolness between himself and Carl had been gradually increasing; for the latter, with all a young man's dread of sycophancy and servility, had met Mr. Waldron's change of manner with a distance and reserve equal to his own. He had been even a little too independent of his patron in his arrangements with respect to the church; and Mr. Waldron had felt chafed and angry. He came to the conclusion that a church-meeting would do no harm; and the responsibility and burden would be partly taken off his shoulders. Carl consented to summon it, but declined to be himself present.

Upon the occasion of this meeting, to the great wonder of the little church, the tall, thin, bent form of John Morley, whose voice had been silent so many years, rose up in its dark corner, and his tones, slow and tardy in their utterance as those of a man long unused to speech, sounded solemnly through the little chapel.

"You are about to do a great wrong, brethren," he said; "this pastor of ours is a young man, younger than any man among us. His mind is more active than ours, and more open to mental

and spiritual influences. What if he should venture sometimes upon unknown seas? I know him well, and I can answer for him that there is no desire in his heart so strong as to know the truth, and that the truth should make him free. We do not ourselves know all the truth; we can but make guesses at it. And shall not he make his guesses also? Even if he were in error, would it not be wiser, better, more like Christ, who did not cast away Peter, though he said to him, 'Thou savourest not the things that be of God, but the things that be of men'—would it not be more like him to restore our pastor, in a spirit of meekness, from any error into which he may have fallen? I say, brethren, pray for him as much and as often as ye please; but do not set upon him, in the very outset of his career, the brand of heresy. You may make him what he is not—a heretic."

John Morley sat down, and Hester crept closer to him, and pressed his hand tightly in her own.

Miss Waldron also moved nearer her father's side, and pushed him on with her elbow. She was pale, and her lips moved with nervous twitchings. She was not at all sure what her father would say; and every eye was riveted upon him. The decision rested with him alone.

"Brethren," he said, "you have heard brother Morley state that we are, all of us, mere guessers at truth. What! Have we not then the open Bible in our hands? Have we no carefully digested system of theology, in which our students are well grounded before they are sent forth as the commissioned overseers of God's people? The best thing that brother Morley can say is that our pastor is making guesses at truth! But can we trust our souls to a guesser only? Is that not like the blind leading the blind? True, he is younger than we are, but we look upon him as one wiser, better instructed than we; one whose whole time and talents are consecrated to the study of religious truths. We bring our souls, weary and fretted with the world, to be comforted and nourished by him, whom we set apart from the vexations of worldly labour. We commit our youth and our children to his teaching. How easily could he insinuate error into our unguarded souls, and the souls of our children! There is danger for a church when its leader and teacher is no more than a guesser at truth."

Mr. Waldron had said a good deal more than he intended; but it was so long since he had had the chance of a wrestle with John Morley, that he warmed to it, as the heart of an old soldier warms at the voice of a foe. He expected his speech to bring his opponent to his feet again, as in old times; but John Morley sat still, his white head bowed, and his face turned away from his brethren: the brief flame, having flickered, had gone out. The next speaker followed emphatically upon the side

of Mr. Waldron; and at the close of the meeting, which lasted double its ordinary time, it was all but formally decided that Carl was too deeply tainted with heresy to be fit for the pastorate of the small church at Little Aston.

It would be utterly impossible to describe the agony and dismay of Carl at the conduct of his church in bringing the charge of heresy against him. They pronounced him to have been found wanting in the most vital point. He had given himself with unchecked ardour and vigour to his work. He had felt a glow of inextinguishable exultation in calling himself a Christian minister. He had thrown over all the littlenesses, and follies, and blemishes of his church a glow of spiritual interest and romance. He had clipped for it the wings of his ambition, which had been stretched for a higher sphere than Little Aston. He had thought of it, cared for it, dreamed for it, studied it, as a young husband cares for and studies his bride. And now! Scarcely a year had elapsed since he had espoused her in all her meanness and poverty, and she had turned against him as one unfit to be her head.

There was not even a division of opinion in the church. One and all had followed in the wake of Mr. Waldron, who had been betrayed into a course from which he could not retreat with dignity; though he longed for the church to assert its own independence, and to drive him from his position. On the contrary, everybody agreed with him. He even began to suspect that his daughter had been using him as a cat's-paw; and in his quickened shrewdness he fancied the offence Carl

was being punished for was very far removed from heresy. It weighed very heavily with him that the young minister should quit his first charge with the stigma of unsound doctrine attaching to him.

For it soon came to that. Carl, with the generous impatience of youth, would not stay with his church if it turned cold ungrateful looks upon him. He sent in his resignation, in a letter written in bitter sorrow and hot anger, as a lover might bid farewell to a faithless mistress. He must leave Annie and Grant, he must leave even Hester. He must throw himself afresh upon the world, dishonoured by no slight dishonour. From his earliest boyhood he had been set apart and trained for the ministry, to which his father and his father's father had belonged, and now he was declared unworthy of his office! He did not know how to turn himself to any other pursuit. It was even possible, for any calamity seemed possible after this, that he might come to be in want of bread. The prospect, looked at in the brightest light, was but dismal: looked at from the sombre gloom of his spirits, it was desperate. With the loss of his reputation for orthodoxy he had lost everything.

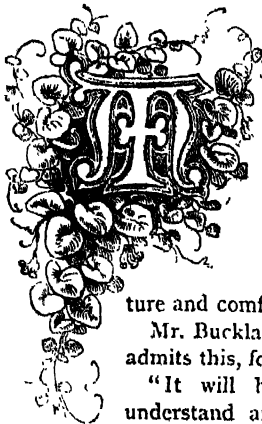
The church was then meeting for the reception of his resignation, and he was deeply sunk in melancholy musing, when his study-door softly opened, and he could scarcely give credence to his own senses. There stood John Morley, breathless and palpitating, with an air of self-amazement and fear upon his face. He looked in at Carl, as if he were in a dream; but the gripe he gave to his out-stretched hand was anything but doubtful or nerveless.

END OF CHAPTER THE TWENTY-FOURTH.

FISH FOR CULTIVATION.

BY GREVILLE FENNELL.

IN TWO PARTS.—PART THE SECOND.



AY it not, therefore, be just possible that we have transferred the fish from waters adapted to its growth and healthfulness, in which all excellence consists, to streams less congenial or entirely opposed to its culture and comfort?

Mr. Buckland unconsciously, we think, admits this, for he says:—

"It will be perfectly impossible to understand aright the natural habits of the salmon, unless we regard them from the proper point of view—viz., that the goings and comings of these curious migratory creatures are independent of human interference,

and that they simply obey the Divine laws which have been laid down for them from the beginning of time."

The salmon is admittedly a sea-fish, and ascends certain rivers of its own individual selection, and those only in which it was reared, in order to deposit its eggs, as its parents had done before it.

Now is it not possible that the original selection of any particular river may have been influenced by particular fish from some peculiarities in the element more or less agreeing with its nature—for instance, the temperature of the water, and its chemical compounds—and that in the very ova itself is inherent that principle of selection which we find in birds following the fixed inclination of their parents for particular trees, in dogs for particular habits, and in almost every animal for

some exquisite choice of selection, in which we may discern a wonderful order and foresight on the part of the Creator, and in which man's attempt to interfere but ends in loss and disappointment? We are quite aware that this would imply that were salmon eggs of the Tyne and Tweed hatched in the Thames, or any river opposed to or varied in the composition of its waters to those northern streams, the young would either become unhealthy and fall a prey to the rapacious fish, or that having once got to sea, they would, instead of returning to the place of importation, make presently, if possible, for the old haunts of their parents; or, it may be, shed their spawn fruitlessly in the ocean or its estuaries.

Once admitting the unerring instinct of these mysterious children of the flood, we can scarcely deny them the credit of the same attributes we freely extend to the creatures of the earth.

As there is more importance in this hypothesis than would at first appear, and as it most intimately concerns our food resources being diverted into proper channels, we will take the liberty to quote again from Mr. Buckland. That gentleman, having shown to demonstration that the olfactory organs of the salmon are most beautifully constructed and highly sensitive, says:—

"Doubtless to the fish each river has got its own smell—taste, flavour, as it has hitherto been called, but this, I think, is a wrong expression. . . . When the salmon is coming in from the sea, he smells about till he scents the water of his own river. This guides him in the right direction, and he has only to follow up the scent, in other words to 'follow his nose,' to get up into fresh water—*i.e.*, if he is in a travelling humour. Thus a salmon coming up from sea into the Bristol Channel would get a smell of water meeting him. 'I am a Wye salmon,' he would say to himself. 'This is not the Wye water; it's the wrong tap, it's the Usk. I must go a few miles further on,' and he gets upstream again."

May not our zealous pisciculturist have been "sniffing" at the wrong rivers all this time, without the instinct foreshadowed above, and may it not account for the trouble and expense which have been so fruitlessly thrown away for nearly a quarter of a century upon the Thames, etc., to render it and others salmon-producing rivers?

Should we prove correct in our surmise, the course for the pisciculturist is a simple one. He will have to abandon all the difficulties and expenses of the transit of ova from one river to another, and confine his interesting labours in turn to individual waters.

Thus the ova of the spawning fish of the Tay should be carefully watched and tended on the banks of that river, and when sufficiently grown turned into a tributary only of the parent stream.

The same with other well-known salmon-producing waters; for what is clearly wanted, and stands as the highest imperative condition, is *protection*—protection from every enemy of the parent fish, the ova and the fry, and that secured in each river of their especial choice, we have done much, if not all, which the experience of very many, it is to be hoped not altogether wasted, years, plainly suggests.

The cast of the largest salmon is from the river Tay, weighing 70 lbs. The Rhine shows one of 69 lbs., the Shannon of 54 lbs., and the Wye of 50 lbs.

The anatomical casts of salmon will afford a welcome treat to the student of ichthyology, and *not* strange to say, of mechanics, who must have learned by this time to confess that "inventions" are only hidden from us, and but wait discovery; it will therefore not be a matter of surprise to them to find that the principle of the Archimedian screw is intimately connected with a salmon's internal economy.

The white fat attached to the pyloric appendages of the salmon, as seen in these casts, is no less noticeable, being provided, it is reasonably supposed, in part for the sustenance of the fish while in fresh water.

The live fish in the tanks are of exceeding interest, for although we may not conclude that we are actually seeing them act as in their free and natural state, we may, with the experience we have acquired, compare and draw inferences therefrom which by careful analysis may prove of use.

The living grayling are here, as in their native waters, a most lively and active fish. It has been said that wherever the grayling has been introduced into trout streams in this and other countries, the latter fish have fallen off both in size and numbers, the reason assigned being that the grayling hunt and harass the trout. This from observation may be the case, but we do not think that this infliction is purposely done. The trout in its habits is nearly solitary, and it confines itself mostly to one spot, seldom quitting it unless to feed. It may, therefore, be easily imagined that the shadow-like darting about of its river-bedfellow is far from pleasant to it, and that this constant disturbance of and intrusion upon its quiet habits must at length have its effect.

There are likewise other kinds of fish—carp, for instance—in this tank with the grayling, and they all more or less appear to partake of the fear that the restless character of the grayling bodes them no good, or, at least, is an intrusive aggression upon their less flighty dispositions.

The odour of the grayling by some person is compared to thyme, and, perhaps, hence its name *thymallus*; but we, as long back as 1845, pronounced the scent to be more closely allied to that

of the smelt, in which the odour exhaled is that of a freshly-cut cucumber. May there not be something in this which is offensive to other fishes, and tends, in addition to the restlessness of the grayling, as is observed, to surrender up a quick running stream and marly bottom almost exclusively to grayling and perch?

The gold-schlei which has been acclimatised in this country is a tench of a peculiarly light copper or golden colour, and has many characteristics which make themselves manifest to the observer—the power of revolving its eye, after the manner of the chameleon, upon the axis of that organ, its calm and lethargic position, and the very slight appearance of respiration are amongst other peculiarities.

A cast of the Spiegel carp from Silesia is not less curious, from having portions of its body entirely destitute of scales; but this deficiency is made up by enormous scales of irregular sizes, some as much as one inch and three-quarters in diameter, running along the sides of the fish; two smaller rows, one on each side of the back, and a patch of scales near the pectoral fin, the uncovered portions of the skin being extremely tough. There are several varieties of this fish in Germany, some of which have no scales at all, and are called *leder* or leather carp.

Living specimens of these singular creatures are likewise displayed here, of about 3 oz. each, and one was shown recently at the Zoological Society by Lord Arthur Russell. Dr. A. Gunther, the celebrated ichthyologist, said both varieties were well known in Germany, and he believed the preference shown for them by the cooks was in consequence of their requiring less trouble in preparing for culinary operations. This carp is not a native of Europe, but appears to have been brought from the East, and has sported into an immense number of varieties. The opinion that they were hybrid tench was wholly erroneous, as the carp and tench have differences of organisation so essential that they could not interbreed.

The great lake trout, from Neufchâtel, and their hybrids Christiana trout and Tyne salmon, all hatched in the Horticultural Gardens, are apparently doing well.

The above, with models of sea-fish—a maigre of 80 lbs.; an angler fish; the taper; the shark, and its young; a sturgeon of 212 lbs.; the sun-fish; the torpedo, showing its electric organs; the electric and monster eels, both fresh and salt; a bass, from Poole, Dorset, 13½ lbs.; many of the great family of the rays or skate—the baby hippopotamus, three days old, 99 lbs. in weight, and a collection of nets and weapons used in poaching, assist to make up an exhibition as unique as it is suggestive and useful.

Indeed, the models of the bad salmon seized at

Billingsgate as unfit for food, and the disgusting appearance of the kelts, are in themselves most instructive, as showing that under whatever disguise ingenious man may hide creatures in this repulsive state to cheat the community into their purchase as wholesome nutriment, their Maker, at least, has stamped upon them, most clearly and unmistakably to the senses, that they should be avoided, and left to recover again their health and condition.

Thus will this museum be the means of letting in a large amount of daylight upon a hitherto dark chamber of ignorance, the enlightenment of which cannot be other than beneficial, and aided by the establishment of aquariums solely devoted to the utilities of science, we may hope ere long to find greater appreciation and application of those truths which, when judiciously exercised, infuse the largest amount of material good amongst the community. We have with others long looked, but looked in vain, to the numberless angling clubs, still on the increase in Great Britain, for this awakening sentiment, but all the efforts to stir any of the associations into action, or to take up any one branch of knowledge which might lead to a thought beyond the mere catching of fish, have proved lamentably futile. Indeed, even the most pretentious of these clubs was but recently addressed from the presidential chair as a last appeal in these words by Mr. Buckland:—

“I earnestly entreat you to consider that thus organised you have an important mission in your trust. I allude to the development of your resources, mental and otherwise, to the study of fish, and the power you possess to merge yourselves into a grand national scientific piscatorial society, having a kind of central body, as in other countries which already possess their great fishing societies—societies which, not content with the selfishness of sport, divert their sympathies into wide-spread channels for the public good, under the conviction that there are realms of usefulness existent both collectively and springing from the individual pursuits of each of their members.”

These clubs, however, have not as yet responded to this friendly invitation, but it is a healthy sign to find that Mr. T. R. Sachs, the late secretary of one of these associations, here associated with Mr. Buckland, is doing his best to popularise the objects we have so briefly glanced at.

The formation of a club exclusively devoted to the higher branches of angling and the regions of natural history, which ought ever to surround its pursuits, is talked of, and if started will certainly fall into its appointed place not a year too soon.

Mr. Edon, an intelligent attendant, should be applied to whenever the visitor is in doubt, or desires any special information respecting the contents of the Economic Fish Museum.



"THE BOOK SHALL BE DEEP BURIED"

A CAMPAIGN IN KABYLIA.
THE NARRATIVE OF A CHASSEUR D'AFRIQUE.



"WITH OLD LUBIN IN FRONT."

BY ERCKMANN-CHATRIAN.

CHAPTER THE FIRST.

LISTEN to me (said my friend Goguel to me); you are a peaceable man; you are fond of cattle, bees, and everything belonging to country life. Nothing can be more natural; from

father to son your family have always been ploughing, and sowing, and reaping. But you must not suppose that all men are just like you, and that you alone are fulfilling the decrees of Heaven. If there was to be nothing but peace in the world, God

would never have made hawks to pounce down upon your poultry, wolves to devour your flocks, and pikes to swallow carp.

For my part, I confess to feeling a far greater satisfaction when I am bestriding a good horse, with a sword hanging at my belt and a carbine slung to my side, than when I used to be seated on a cart carrying vegetables to market.

Well, so it is ; every man to his trade.

The happiest day of my life was the 30th of March, 1871, when Gresse, an old trumpeter in the First Chasseurs d'Afrique, at Blidah, sounded a call to the quartermasters of all the squadrons; and, entering the ward-room, I saw Adjutant Pigacé smiling and twisting his moustaches.

I felt in a moment that something pleasant was going to happen, and I was not mistaken, for the moment our comrades were assembled, the adjutant cried—

"The order of the day ! What number ? What ! no one knows ? Oh, come ! we will settle that by-and-by. Promotions : the colonel in command of the First Regiment of Chasseurs d'Afrique appoints Alban Montezuma Goguel quartermaster."

He had scarcely ceased speaking when I felt myself quite another man. I, Goguel, appointed, during the rest of the war against Prussia, quartermaster in the Chasseurs d'Afrique, at the end of only eight months' service ! You would never be able to understand the extent of my gladness. I drew myself up, with my shoulders back, and my two thumbs in my trousers' pockets, spreading them out wide, and shouting, "Vive la France !"

The other fellows laughed ; and the adjutant, closing his book, said to me with a smile—

"Aha ! Goguel ; there you are now with your foot in the stirrup ; the path of honour lies before you."

You may be sure I invited my comrades to take absinthe with me ; and so we marched off to the canteen arm-in-arm. Till five o'clock we did nothing but drink and laugh, and see the best side of everything. But at five Gresse sounded the call again. We went out, and in front of the quarters, Quartermaster Goguel is named to join the detachment at Tizi-Ouzou with four chasseurs on foot.

Tizi-Ouzou is in the Kabyle country, about thirty-five leagues from Blidah. We have a fort in that place for the protection of the European villages. A few of our men had died down there, either of sickness or through other causes, and four of our chasseurs were ordered there to replace those men and to mount their horses.

That was right enough, of course, but it seemed to me very hard to make my men carry their cloaks and their baggage for thirty-five leagues under the burning sun of Africa. I have always been of opinion that the soldier ought to be taken care of as

much as possible ; and I spent the rest of the day plaguing the commissaries to let us have old Lubin's one-horse car to carry my chasseurs—a business this old fellow had carried on for fifteen years past. At last my request was acceded to.

Next morning, before daybreak, having saddled my horse and seen that my men were fully equipped, I gave the word to march.

But first I went to shake hands with my friend Jaquet, an attorney at Blidah. My horse was pawing the ground at the door. We drank a glass of kirschwasser that he had had from home ; then, after a hearty shake, I vaulted into my saddle, and rejoined my little detachment at a gallop.

The old Jews' street was still silent and empty ; a few women were sweeping the pavement, and were turning round to see the quartermaster darting past at full speed, with his sword jingling against his boot, and his white cap-cover floating over his shoulders.

Very soon after leaving the Algiers Gate I overtook the cart, which was moving slowly along with my four chasseurs smoking their pipes in the early morning, and talking of anything that came into their heads.

A little further on we fell into the Dalmatie road, a military road along the foot of the Atlas mountains, which was to lead us direct to Arba, the end of our first day's march.

Never shall I forget the calm pleasure of our start, at that early hour when the air is still cool under the shadow of the mighty Atlas. The quails were calling and answering one another in the midst of the corn : these birds are innumerable in Algeria. At our right rose the Atlas mountains, with copses of mastic-trees covering their feet, with golden furze-bushes and oleander-trees ; from our left spread out the plain of Metidja, covered with rich crops, and traversed by a thousand little rills flowing from the neighbouring passes.

As the sun rose in the sky, the turtle-doves, the nightingales, and other native birds raised their voices in the sycamores, and we were better able to distinguish through the shadow at the foot of the Nador the barracks of the Zouaves, whither I had so frequently accompanied my comrades, Rimbaud and Lauriston ; further on, the great pyramidal mound of stones called the Queen's Tomb, and at the furthest horizon the high mountain of the Zachar.

The prospect was of immense extent ; no one without seeing it could form any idea of the wealth of this country.

If railroads had been made in Algeria thirty years ago, villages would have been built by thousands along their lines, as they tell us they are in America ; and then we should have a richer France, and more beautiful than the old. But we want to see the villages first, before we lay down the rails,

or make even common roads; we bestow whole regions upon people who grow nothing, and who are opposed to the settlement of real colonists upon this promised land; and, to crown all, we have set up those Arab bureaux.

Perhaps you don't know what an Arab bureau is; I will tell you; it will not take me long.

In the first place, Algeria is divided into three great provinces: Algiers in the centre; Oran, west; and Constantine, east.

Each of these provinces is subdivided; and these smaller divisions are administered, some by a civil government, by prefects, as in France, others are under military government by Arab bureaux.

In these provinces the Arab bureaux possess full powers. They impose the taxes; they administer justice; they superintend public education; they even claim authority in matters of religion.

So it happens that the post of head of an Arab bureau, no matter how small it may be, is a capital berth, especially as regards the collection of taxes. A mere sub-lieutenant, over head and ears in debt, and ruined by gambling, luxury, and evil habits, when he has the good fortune to be set over some Arab bureau, pays off his debts in a very short time, buys an estate, rides blood horses, walks upon lion-skins and panther-skins; in fact lives in the style of a pacha—and all upon a sub-lieutenant's pay.

Of course I shall not attempt to account for this phenomenon, or explain the mode of procedure of these gentlemen. That is their business; and it is not the business of the army of Africa. A good soldier's duty is to fight when his country requires his services, and not to thrust his nose into doubtful matters. But you will understand that those fellows stick to their posts in proportion to their profits, and that the Arab bureaux look upon the civil administration as their most dangerous enemy.

So we went on, thinking; I upon my horse Negro, which seemed to me to be moving on thoughtfully like ourselves, raising his head, and looking around, with a low neigh; and my men upon their low car, with old Lubin in front, in his weather-stained blouse, his fragment of an old hat hanging over his ear, crying at every step, "Hue, Grisette, hue," which had not the least effect in inducing her to move faster.

Now and then we met an Arab on the road, perched upon his horse with his knees up, as if he were sitting in an arm-chair, his long, full, white burnouse covering him down to the stirrups, his long rifle slung over his shoulder; further on, perhaps, a young woman returning from the neighbouring well, with her stone jug resting on her shoulder.

Not a word passed between us. Those people always seemed to treat us with contempt, passing us without so much as a side-glance.

In the little village of Dalmatic, where we arrived about six in the morning, my men insisted on my taking a glass of wine, which I could not refuse. That thin Dalmatian wine is excellent; but for all that I told them plainly, after wiping my moustache, that we would have no more stoppages on the way, because an officer has his own duties to perform; that if they behaved well they should have their share of fifty francs which my friend Jaquet had lent me, to lighten the fatigue of the journey; but that if they played any tricks upon me, they should get nothing but their pay. They promised that all should be well, and we started, having only about thirty kilometres further to go.*

On my way I could not help smiling at the thought of the sportsmen in our country, wearying themselves from morning to night running after a hare, while from every clump of dwarf oaks, mastics, or aloes, interwoven with a long grass called alfa, flights of partridges and Carthage hens swarmed out in all directions.

It is most assuredly a country well stocked with game! As for agriculture, there is a profusion of every product. That is the country for our poor labourers to live in with their wives and children, who have to toil so hard to get a little barley and a few potatoes to grow out of the red sand of our mountains. But we should be far better without those Arab bureaux, which are the cause of perpetual wars in Africa; and what farmers want in the very first place is peace.

Sometimes, on raising our eyes, we would notice far over the mulberry, olive, and other trees, far up the hillside, an Arab shepherd leaning upon his long crook, and silently gazing upon us, with his lean, short-haired dog behind him, amongst the little flock of sheep.

To complete the picture, we met from time to time a Kabyle, a native of another kind, darker, more spare, and yet more muscular than the Arab, and mostly employed in trade. These men are seldom seen on horseback, being genuine mountaineers. They passed by us wrapped in greasy burnouses, and driving their mules loaded with skins of oil. Oil is the chief article of the Kabyle trade. In every village is a press to which the natives bring their crops of olives. The Kabyles supply our markets with oranges, citrons, peaches, pomegranates, melons, cucumbers, peppercorns, the fruit of the egg-plant—in a word, with all the fruits and vegetables which they grow around their villages. Corn is grown only by the Europeans. They make that their business.

My chasseurs began with singing comic songs and laughing over them, and then they turned to some of the old songs they had sung in the Crimea, in Italy, in Mexico, and even at Lunéville in Lorraine,

* A kilometre is 1,093 yards, therefore thirty kilometres are about eighteen miles.

before the retreat upon Metz and Sedan, when three out of four of our old comrades had fallen in arms. Thinking of those brave fellows, the little party looked grave. They had all done their duty, and now were lying in the mists of the Meuse and the Moselle.

But is it not better to be dead, than to live and to remember that you have given up your sword to save your skin and your munitions of war? At any rate, the dead feel no shame, and their memory animates the patriot's breast.

At last, at the distance of four kilometres from the end of our first day's march, I went ahead, knowing that at Arba I should find my old comrade Rellin, who had been detached a fortnight before, along with twenty men, to guard a powder-train.

On approaching Arba, I observed outside the walls the bivouac, the ammunition wagons, the tents, the picketed horses. I galloped there at once, and I can fancy I still see old Rellin, with his pointed beard, his képi over one ear, busy mending his boots. I can still hear him calling to me, thrusting his head through his tattered tent—

"Hallo, Goguel! is that you? Come on, old fellow. Of course you have got the pay for my detachment?"

"No, that I have not. I have nothing for you but a good appetite, which I recommend to your care."

He laughed, and answered, "Well then, come off your horse." And turning to one of his chasseurs, who was rubbing down the horses a little further off, he cried—

"Mathis, picket the quartermaster's horse, and see that he is properly attended to."

"Yes, quartermaster."

"And inform the cook that there's work for another knife and fork."

Then he came out, and taking me by the arm he said—

"Now we'll have a glass of vermouth, till the cook has made all ready."

We were passing the low wall of the bivouac, when, turning round again, with his hands hollowed on each side of his mouth, he shouted—

"Mathis, you will find us at the 'Colon Econome.'"

The chasseur beckoned that he heard, and we threaded our way down a narrow passage in front of the bivouac. Arba is a large, fine European village, situated at the junction of the military road along the foot of the Atlas, with that from Algiers to Aumale; its houses are in straight lines and substantially built, roofed with tiles, and well white-washed.

The village has a church, a guard-house, a large mill upon the El-Arach, a noble square planted with trees, a fine fountain built in the form of a cross, and outside, just where we were encamped,

a corn and cattle market, to which the neighbouring dealers resort twice in the week.

A little further on, we entered the handsome inn called "Le Colon Econome," a corner house; but we had scarcely had time to take our seats, when Mathis came to call us at twelve exactly, and we returned to the bivouac, where my men, who had just arrived, were sharing their comrades' mess.

Rellin and I, seated upon our saddles in the shadow of his tent, dined off a boiled chicken and rice, and as I had remembered to bring a bottle of wine from the inn, we made ourselves very comfortable; and then we had coffee.

Whilst eating and drinking, Rellin informed me that a Caïd in the neighbourhood of Aumale had thrown up his office and his pay, and declared war against us; that the third and fourth squadrons of the regiment had started for Aumale by forced marches, leaving twenty baggage carts standing there, close by ours, under the guard of a few chasseurs; and that he was expecting every minute the arrival of a battalion of the First Zouaves to escort the train.

He informed me besides that the diligence from Algiers had ceased running, and that the Arabs had begun hostilities by cutting the telegraph wires.

This news surprised me, for at Blidah that very morning there had been no mention of all this.

Rellin assured me that the Arabs had been tempting our men to sell them chassépot cartridges, which made them suspect that something wrong was going on.

I was indeed surprised at first; the notion of crossing swords with the Arabs then came over me, and filled me with excitement; and thinking of these matters, I went to take an afternoon nap in Rellin's tent. About four o'clock he awoke me; we found all right, the chasseurs at their post, and we returned to the "Colon Econome." A crowd of Algerine corn and cattle dealers, who had no doubt come for next day's market, filled the public room, and were drinking beer. The innkeeper's two daughters found their hands full.

These men, with their straw hats and dark faces, seemed to be very good fellows. The sight of our uniforms was some satisfaction to them; they invited us to a glass of beer with them; Rellin accepted, and we were very soon deep in their politics.

A little old white-headed man, with animated eyes and a sharp nose, argued that all our misfortunes were caused by the Empire. He knew everything that had happened in the colony for forty years, and energetically thumped the table with his small fist. He told us of numberless abominable deeds done by the Arab bureaux, the congregations of Jesuits, the commercial companies, and many others besides.

I don't know where the little man had picked up

all this ; and all I can remember just now was his winding-up, when he cried—

“Yes, gentlemen, that’s just how we stand. It’s melancholy—it is dreadful to think of ! But wait a few days, and you will see worse coming. I am told that out at Aumale things are looking bad ; that Mahomet-el-Mokrani is in open revolt. Well, I should not be surprised if Arab bureaux were at the bottom of that. It is said that the new governor-general, Monsieur de Gueydon, has arrived with full powers from the Republic, and that his first act will be the suppression of the Arab bureaux. I doubt it ; for Monsieur de Gueydon is a Royalist and under the influence of the priests ; but still the Arab bureaux, believing themselves in danger, may very likely get up a little insurrection, just as they have done so many times before, to prove once more that they are indispensable.”

Not one of those dealers found fault with his speech ; on the contrary, they all seemed to be of his opinion, and as for us it was not our business, and we listened without making remarks of our own.

Towards evening all those people went away, and we two remained at the inn alone, watching the movements of the innkeeper’s daughters, Marguerite and Marie : the first a dark-eyed, lively brunette ; the second a fair-haired girl. They were putting the house to-rights after the confusion left by the visitors. The younger ended by laying the cloth for supper ; and the landlord, Monsieur Pouchet—a tall, thin man, of very respectable

appearance—pleased, no doubt, with our quiet behaviour, invited us to take our soup with his family, an invitation we accepted with great pleasure.

I took good care to let everybody be seated first, and then managed to sit by the side of Mademoiselle Marie, whose blue eyes and fair hair reminded me of the young lasses of the Vosges.

I should be very much puzzled to tell you what we had for supper ; but I think it was a haricot soup, followed by a leg of mutton, flavoured with garlic, and a salad ; but this I can positively affirm, that when I returned to the bivouac about ten, I would willingly have given my quartermaster’s stripes to be always seated at the side of Mademoiselle Marie ; and that that night, not having unpacked my tent, and sharing Rellin’s with him, I prevented him from even closing his eyes by boring him with my enthusiastic admiration of that young lady.

It was a magnificent, bright, and starlight night. The nightingales were chaunting out of every orange grove with all the powers of their tuneful voices, and the sweet perfume of the flowers drove me crazy.

“You are asleep, Rellin ? Are you not ashamed of yourself to sleep such a night as this ?” said I, nudging him with my elbow.

“No, no—I can hear you—go on, go on !” said he, beginning to snore softly, “I am listening.”

END OF CHAPTER THE FIRST.

HOMES AND HAUNTS FOR SALE.



T would really seem as if during this year of grace, 1873, the nine maiden ladies whom we know as the Muses had grown fidgety and discontented, or, at all events, as if several of them had made up their minds to change their whereabouts, and all without rhyme or reason—

“*Helicone relicto
Longius ire juvat, placidasque relinquere
pedes.*”

But joking apart, never in any summer season, even in the days of George Robins, were there so many “homes and haunts” of poets, writers, and statesmen offered for public sale as now. In fact, it would be almost as easy to say what poet’s house is not about to “change hands” this year, as what are destined to find new owners. Newstead Abbey, with its cloisters, cells, and woods, passed as we all know, by purchase, some ten or twelve years ago, from the family of Wildman to that of Webb ; and Coleridge’s house at Highgate still stands just

where it did, and as it did when occupied by him, but it no longer has a Coleridge for its master. The home of Charles Lamb at Edmonton is there ; so is Abraham Cowley’s house at Chertsey ; so is the house in which Gray lived at Stoke, near Eton ; so also is Sir William Herschel’s house at Slough ; though Milton’s house close by, at Horton, where his first wife died, has been pulled down, and superseded by a larger and finer structure ; while Abbotsford, the charming and pleasant home of Sir Walter Scott, has devolved in all its integrity, by the death of Mr. Hope Scott, upon the only surviving daughter of his first wife, Miss Lockhart, a young lady who, no doubt, at no very distant day will carry it by marriage into another family. Let us hope that every happiness will accompany the change.

But, as I said above, quite a little host of pleasant “homes and haunts” of great men has just been thrown into the market, and each must pass—if it has not already passed—under the auctioneer’s hammer. Hanworth Park, between Hounslow and Windsor, at one time the favourite resort of Henry

the Eighth, and which still can point to one part of the gardens as laid out under the eye of Queen Elizabeth, was offered for sale a week or two ago; and its magnificent library, wonderfully rich in MSS., has just been dispersed (June, 1873) under the hammer. Brockton Hall, in Hertfordshire, the favourite residence of two late popular premiers, Lord Melbourne and Lord Palmerston, and the place where the last-named statesman breathed his last, was only a short time since advertised as "To be sold or let, with immediate possession." The same also has been the case within a few brief months with Pitt's house at Hayes, in Kent, and with Nyn Park, near Barnet, once the home of the all-powerful Earls of Warwick and Bedford.

But foremost on our list stands Pope's Villa and Grotto at Twickenham. The estate, as we learn from the poet's correspondence, was purchased by him in 1715, and the house and grounds have been greatly altered since his time; the former, in fact, having been entirely rebuilt. At the time Pope came into possession of it, the house was not large, but he bestowed upon it considerable improvements, and took great delight in disposing and embellishing the grounds. The chief part of the grounds lay on the opposite side of the high road through Twickenham to Teddington; and as a means of communication he worked a subterranean passage beneath the road, ornamenting it with "curious spars and gems," which is, perhaps, best described in the following passage in a letter addressed by Pope himself to Mr. Edward Blount, under date June 2, 1725:—"I have put my last hand to my works in my gardens, in happily finishing the subterraneous (*sic*) way and grotto. I there found a spring of the clearest water, which falls in a perpetual rill, that echoes through the cavern day and night. From the river Thames you see through my arch up a walk of the wilderness, to an open temple, wholly composed of shells in the most rustic manner; and from that distance, under the temple, you look down through a sloping arcade of trees, and see the sails on the river passing suddenly and vanishing, as through a perspective glass. When you shut the door of this grotto, it becomes, on the instant, from a luminous room, a *camera obscura*, on the walls of which all objects of the river, hills, woods, and boats, are forming a moving picture in their visible radiations; and when you have a mind to light it up, it affords you a very different scene. It is finished with shells interspersed with pieces of looking-glass, in angular forms, and in the ceiling is a star of the same material, at which, when a lamp (of an orbicular figure, of thin alabaster) is hung in the middle, a thousand pointed rays glitter, and are reflected over the place. There are connected to this grotto by a narrower passage two porches—one towards the river, of smooth stones, full of light, and open; the

other toward the garden, shadowed with trees, rough with shells, flints, and iron ore. The bottom is paved with simple pebble, as is also the adjoining walk up the wilderness to the temple, in the natural taste, agreeing not ill with the little dripping murmur, and the aquatic idea of the whole place."

Twickenham, indeed, may be regarded as Pope's life-long home, although the house wherein he lived has long since ceased to exist. He planted the grounds on the opposite side of the road himself. One who knew it well at the commencement of this century thus describes it:—"There was a wilderness, with a gardener's house buried in the foliage, a dark, shadowy walk, leading direct from the grotto to an exquisite little temple built of shells, and rising like an enchanted palace of the naiads or hamadryads in the bosky wood, within hearing of the waters that flung their music upon the echoes of the cavern. The grounds beyond were dotted over with trees, and intersected by irregular paths, now losing themselves in shadow, and now glancing out again into the sunshine. At the remote extremity, upon a mound, stood a monument inscribed to the memory of Pope's mother. The mound is still pointed out, but not a vestige of the monument is now to be seen, one of the former proprietors of the estate having, it is stated, sold it to the late Queen Dowager for a hundred pounds!

"Then there were groups of shrubs bounding the extremity, or rather suggesting a notion of distance that cheated the imagination into the notion that there were no bounds to the landscape. The beauty with which these few acres were laid out formed a subject of universal admiration, and it is believed, on the authority of Walpole, that Kent derived his first lessons in ornamental planting from the slender fingers of Pope."

The temple, I may add, is gone, though the fine chestnut-trees and avenue of elms which once shaded it are there; the "subterraneous" passage and grotto also, which extend under the road, are still there; so too are the two "porches" or recesses, which now form a kind of side chapels on the right and the left of the passage itself, as you enter from the sloping garden and lawn which front the river.

The house itself, now known as "Pope's Villa," is a picturesque building, somewhat resembling a Swiss chalet, erected about five-and-twenty years ago, and over the gateway leading into the garden, completely hid by a thick curtain of ivy, is a tablet bearing the following inscription:—"On this spot stood, until 1804, the house of Alexander Pope. The grotto that formed its basement still remains. 1842." In one of the recesses of the grotto is preserved the decayed trunk of a willow-tree, which was planted by Pope soon after he came to reside

here, on leaving his father's villa at Binfield, on the borders of Windsor Forest. It was put up to auction in the City on the 4th of June; but as no bidder offered to give the reserved price, it was "bought in."

Next comes "Mayfield," in the pleasant neighbourhood of Ashbourne, in Derbyshire, or as the good people of the neighbourhood persist in calling it, "Moore's Cottage," because the bard of Erin lived within its walls for some three years or more, while he was busy in composing his romance of Eastern fable, "Lallah Rookh." Here, also, he wrote "Those Evening Bells," the sweet lines so familiar in every English home being suggested by the church bells of Ashbourne, as their sound was wafted across the green meadows on summer evenings. It was here, too, that he enjoyed the friendship of Byron; and many of the trees which surround the house are said to have been planted conjointly by Moore and Byron. The estate around the house is small—about eight or nine acres, if I am rightly informed—just enough to supply the wants of a poet's household, and to enable him to keep a pony, a few cows, and a poultry yard, with vegetables enough to supply his table.

Next on our list is "Plas Newydd," in the Vale of Llangollen, in Denbighshire, for upwards of half a century the home of two romantic old maids, Lady Emily Butler and Miss Sarah Ponsonby, whose fame is known throughout North Wales as "the Ladies of Llangollen." They were both of high birth, and both of Irish extraction; Lady Emily being a few years the elder of the two. Thrown into each other's society in their youthful days, they eloped together, and were brought back again, once at least, to their friends; but "love laughs at locksmiths," so they eloped again; taking ship from the Irish coast, they landed at Holyhead, where they found the Shrewsbury coach waiting to start. They booked and paid for their places to Shrewsbury; but at Llangollen, in Denbighshire, they were so delighted with the scenery that they resolved to cast anchor there for a time. Accordingly, they engaged a cottage standing in little grounds of its own; and, with true feminine instinct, so improved it that in the course of a few months they "made the desert smile." They lived here in retirement till old age came upon them, and they now rest together in the churchyard of Llangollen.

Their house, which, curiously enough, has since their decease been occupied by another pair of maiden ladies—the infection being presumed to be still in existence—is thus described by Murray, in his *Hand-book of North Wales*:—"Plas Newydd is an elegant little cottage, situated on a small knoll and surrounded by very tasteful grounds. A palisade, ornamented with antique and grotesque figures carved in oak, encloses the front,

and the doors and windows are decorated with carving of the same material. A carriage-drive, open to strangers, crosses the lawn immediately in front of the cottage. Within the dwelling of the 'Ladies of Llangollen' is crammed with curiosities, portraits, and other memorials—the gifts of many friends, who came to see them in this secluded spot. The gifts, alas! are gone, though the house remains; the casket remains, but the jewels, where are they?

Yes, whilst they set up their tent here, they were visited by Mademoiselle d'Orléans, Madame de Genlis, and Miss A. M. Seward—who immortalised them in her poetry—and the simple, earnest philanthropy of their lives is still remembered by the peasantry. Their servants would appear to have shared in their goodness, for it is said that the two postboys, who used to ride their carriage-horses, died worth fifteen hundred and one thousand pounds respectively. One who still remembers them speaks of them as singular in their dress as in their modes of life, wearing their hair powdered, short, and uncurled, with men's hats and neck-ties, and blue riding-habits. The story is that neither of them would sit for her portrait; yet each wished for the likeness of the other, and aided a neighbour, Lady Leighton, in obtaining the sketches which, on the success of this double plot, were lithographed and published.

And then again, what story can be more touching than that of Warren Hastings and his much-loved Daylesford, the place of which from a boy he resolved to become the owner, and from which he had hoped to have taken his title if raised to the peerage? Daylesford, four or five centuries ago, had belonged to ancestors of his own name, who were both noble and rich; but the family had been impoverished through their loyalty to Charles the First, and had lately been obliged to sell their estate—not, however, until they had appointed to the family living his own father, as a poor relation for whom it was fit and right to provide. He was born—or at all events he spent his childhood—in the parsonage at Daylesford, and early left an orphan, was reared in the village school. He grew up, and resolved to win a name, and fame, and money, and to become the owner of Daylesford.

He went to India, and came back to England with a fortune after many years, and when Daylesford again came into the market he fortunately purchased it. This was his proudest and his happiest day, and its pleasure far outweighed the pain, trouble, and loss of having to sustain a public impeachment in Westminster Hall. Triumphant acquitted of the charges so rashly brought against him, he went back to Daylesford. Macaulay has told us with all the charms of touching eloquence how he spent there the last years of his life, in

honour and independence; and the local guide-books tell us the more prosaic fact that he "rebuilt the mansion at a considerable cost." This is of stone, and stands on the side of a hill, sheltered by a noble wood, in the midst of undulating grounds of between six and seven hundred acres, which were beautifully laid out by a landscape gardener some twenty years ago, and it commands delightful views of the country. With what pleasure did the old man, his face bronzed by the suns of India, survey the uplands, and pleasant groves, and gardens, all his own, saying to himself, "*Hæc mea sunt!*"

Yet he left no son to succeed him; his name has passed away; there never was a Baron Daylesford in the British Peerage; and the estate for two generations has been in the hands of strangers.

The entire property, including the farms which "go with it," comprises, I believe, about one thousand and eighty acres.

It is to be hoped that the merchant who is said to have lately purchased Daylesford, will keep up the tomb of Warren Hastings in Daylesford Churchyard.

E. WALFORD.

HESTER MORLEY'S PROMISE.

BY HESBA STRETTON,

AUTHOR OF "THE DOCTOR'S DILEMMA," ETC. ETC.

CHAPTER THE TWENTY-FIFTH.

A VISIONARY GLANCE.

"I COULD not stay after your letter was read," said John Morley. "Do you know all that is likely to befall you? Do you know what reports will go out against you to the other churches?"

"I foresee all," answered Carl, with a profound sigh, which was almost a sob.

"Are you prepared to enter some other denomination?" he asked. "You would be welcomed among many; but they would not be the people of your fathers."

"No," he answered, with an aspect of sad resolution. "I cannot change the creed I received from my forefathers. I must remain among my own people, even if I cease to be a minister among them."

"Then what will become of you? how will you live?" asked John Morley.

"God knows," said Carl, almost with a smile.

"My boy," continued John Morley sadly, "ten years ago I was comparatively a rich man, and I wish I was so still, for your sake. But I have few possessions now except debts and my Hester. Still, give an ear to me. If you should be put out of the ministry, there could be no occupation more suited to you than mine. You may be a student and a scholar, if you are a bookseller. Nay, you may yourself become a writer of books. Come to me, then. My business was once good enough, and in young hands, like yours, it would thrive again. Do not despise it, Carl. It seems to me as if you might lift me out of my Slough of Despond. But this is only if you should fail in getting another charge. I trust another pulpit will soon be given to you."

John Morley had spoken hurriedly and stammeringly, and Carl had kept silent in amazement. But when he had ended, and stretched out his

trembling hand to him, Carl caught it eagerly, and bowed down his head upon it to hide his tears.

"Despise it!" he cried, "your home would be like a heaven to me. You love me then? You would take me as your son?"

"With all my heart, my boy," said John Morley, laying his other hand tenderly upon the young man's head.

"And I accept your offer with all my heart," said Carl, after a brief silence. "You know I believe myself called by God to this ministry; but if he gives me no place in another church, I will return here gladly, as freely to you as to a father. We will confront the world together; and it will go hard with me, indeed, if I do not win bread for you and Hester, as well as for myself."

A brighter look was upon John Morley's face than Carl had ever seen there. He asked him to walk home with him, as if he shrank from traversing a second time the streets to which he had been so long a stranger; and Carl accompanied him in a trance of mingled joy and sadness. The dark gables of John Morley's house, standing out against the darkness of the sky, possessed a new beauty for him. Even the dismal sitting-room, with its worn-out furniture, had a glory about it. He could very well pass a blissful life here with Hester. The future was no longer so dreary and blank to him; for if he were compelled to relinquish the lawful ambition of his calling, here would be his happiness and scope for his scholarly pursuits. He was already painting the coming years in bright colours, while he watched John Morley light his lamps, and he saw him casting an anxious and nervous glance at the black panes of the uncurtained window.

"Carl," he whispered, as if fearful of being overheard by some one without, "I have a fancy some nights of a face which looks in upon me out of the dark. I have never spoken of it to Hester, lest a

child like her should be frightened. But look now at yonder corner."

Carl looked earnestly, and detected in the thick darkness of the night the wan outline of Rose's face, far enough from the casement to be only a dim and indistinct sketch. But it was there, with

"but you should have a curtain to this window. These fancies are not good for you."

"Nay, I like the night to stare in upon me," he replied gloomily. "I wonder, at times, if it sees any creature as like itself as I am; neither sun nor stars in many days appearing, and no small tempest



"LISTENED THROUGH THE EMPTY KEYHOLE"

far-off eyes, gazing in upon her husband. A thrill of dread and compassion for them both ran through him. "If John Morley should only resolve to verify for himself the reality of this haunting face, what would happen? He fixed his eyes more keenly upon the apparition, and advanced a step or two nearer the window, and it vanished suddenly into the darker shades of the night.

"Do you see anything?" asked John Morley.

"There is nothing," answered Carl, the prevarication jarring upon his delicate sense of truth;

lying on me. No, no. Let that face stare in to see what sort of a wretch lies here."

He sat down on his own chair, with his grey face half turned from the window, and the full light of the lamp falling upon it. He sank into a long, dreamy fit of reverie, while Carl watched anxiously the black, blank casement beyond him. The pale shadow of John Morley's wife looked in no more; but Carl, before going away, resolved to warn Rose of the risk she ran in thus venturing to gaze in upon the hearth she had forsaken and lost for ever.

CHAPTER THE TWENTY-SIXTH.

CARL'S FAREWELL.

MR. WALDRON'S first action, after having performed the painful duty of reading to the church Carl's resignation, was to write at once to Dr. Hervey, the principal of the college, and entreat him to do all in his power to procure the young discarded minister a new charge. He found it a very difficult matter to explain his own conduct; but what is there that cannot be explained, almost to satisfaction, when it is a self-explanation which is given? Carl's heresy dwindled down into certain refinements of theological and metaphysical distinctions too abstruse for the simple church, which could only digest the food of babes. Nothing would give Mr. Waldron greater pleasure than to see Carl in a position where his active and energetic mind could find more congenial hearers; and if the doctor could hit upon any plan for advancing his interests, he would do anything in his power to further them.

In the meantime, David Scott came down to take Carl's place in the pulpit, and to be patronised by Miss Waldron; while he stood on one side, and saw David drive away in her carriage, and himself was only acknowledged by a freezing bow, strangled in its birth. Carl laughed at times, and chafed at times; and then repented of both natural emotions, with a sincere effort to gain the mastery over nature. Annie felt the same, and yielded without any attempt at all to conquer herself; she only longed for some opportunity of speaking with feminine fidelity to her former friend. Robert came no more to Grant's house, though he was cordial with Grant himself, when he chanced to meet him.

It became a question with Carl whether he should not at once accept John Morley's offer. He had so modest an opinion of himself that it did not seem beneath him to condescend to the business of a bookseller; and he spent the greater portion of his time in John Morley's house, with the idea that he was learning something of it. He drew closer to every member of the isolated household. Once again, as she went about the house, Hester sang gravely, but sweetly, songs which stirred his heart with the most delicious tremor. A blessed calm visited the desolate home. Even John Morley's worn face and sunken eyes seemed to catch a reflection of the pervading peace, as if he had at last consented to a truce with his tormenting memories. Carl began to think that his pastorate was there, and that the little flock given into his care numbered only John Morley and Hester and the lost and banished one, hidden from the sight of all men.

But before long, in the midst of this slumber of ambition, came a more important call than before for Carl. There was a great spring gathering of

their sect in London, and Mr. Waldron was to take the chair at the chief public meeting. In his palmiest days at Aston Court, Carl would never have dreamed of being present as a speaker at this meeting, where the greatest of their preachers would occupy the platform. But his friend, Dr. Hervey, who had been one of the appointed speakers, was seized with a sudden illness a day or two before, and sent for Carl. He told him what he wished to say, and started him off at once.

Carl achieved one of those brilliant and dangerous successes which occasionally fall to the lot of young orators. He took the meeting by storm, and made every speech succeeding his fall flat upon the excited minds of the audience. Miss Waldron, who held a prominent place on the platform, drew her veil over her face, and wept some of the bitterest tears of her life. When the etiquette of the meeting permitted it, all the speakers crowded round Carl, whose father had been known to most of them, and congratulated him upon his triumph. Mr. Waldron shook hands with him publicly, and was loudly cheered for doing so. There was no longer a fear for Carl's future; and his heterodoxy was forgiven and forgotten on the spot.

Carl's absence from Little Aston, which he had supposed would be only for three or four days, prolonged itself into weeks. Sunday after Sunday he was called upon to supply the pulpit in London and the neighbourhood. It ended in his being invited to become co-pastor of one of the first and richest churches in London, whose minister was beginning to fail under the burden of his work. He accepted the offer only on condition that for six months he should be among them as a candidate merely, that they might judge whether he merited the brand of heresy.

He went home at last, but only for a few days. There was a conflict in his mind as to whether he should yet utter his love to Hester, or wait until his own future was sure. Unfortunately and unwisely he decided upon keeping silence. He believed that Hester would feel too greatly divided between her duties to her father and Rose and to him. She had asked him once, in a tone of trouble and supplication, not to let Grant talk any more about her leaving home. It would be impossible to do so, she added hurriedly, for many years to come, if the time ever came. Carl's sensitive nature fancied there was a dread in her mind lest he should say anything to disturb her peace; and he resolved to say nothing till he could say all.

Among the farewells he had to take, none were so painful as parting with Rose. Her life was so sad, so solitary, and so peculiar, that it drew his chivalrous and tender heart very closely to her. The bond between them had something of the sacred relationship of a priest towards a penitent, whom he may absolve or condemn. She saw no

one else but him and Hester; and she naturally leaned more upon him than upon a fellow-woman. Hester was the daughter of the husband she had betrayed, and she dared not reveal to her all the memories which oppressed her broken spirit.

"I have something to tell you," said Carl, as the best consolation he could give her when he was about leaving her in circumstances so desolate; "I have seen your child, your little Hester; and now I am going to live in London she shall come very often to my house."

"God bless you!" cried Rose, sobbing. "But what is to become of me when you are gone? I feel at times as if I must force my way to my husband, and let him strike me dead if he will. I don't know whether I am doing right to be so near to him without him knowing it."

"You must be patient," said Carl pitifully; "you must not tempt him to revenge. Do you not know how he nearly murdered Robert Waldron at his own door, and he would have died in the street if my brother Grant had not found him? Do you wish him to be hurried into murder? Be patient, and leave yourself in Hester's hands. She knows her father better than we do; she loves him more; she will not lose the right time, if it ever come, of confessing all to him. Trust yourself to Hester."

"But how can I be patient?" she exclaimed, her pale face growing paler. "I think day and night that I shall never hear his voice speaking to me again. Perhaps even in heaven, where you tell me there is a place even for me, I shall be nowhere near him; and it may be that through all eternity I shall never hear him say, 'I forgive you.' Ah! you cannot tell what it is, you and Hester, who all your lives long have lived as if you looked up into the face of God himself, and who have no pardon to seek but His, and He has little to forgive. Every night I lie awake and think that death will surely come before I hear him forgive me."

"These are only fancies," said Carl gently; "you are likely to live many years. Your illness is passing away, Grant says. But there is a nearer hope for you perhaps. As soon as I can offer Hester and her father a home with me, I shall ask her to be my wife; I shall ask her father to give her to me. Do you think they will consent?"

"Consent!" repeated Rose, "she loves you, and he thinks of you as a son, she says."

"Then," continued Carl, his face flushing with anticipated joy, "as soon as he is happy once more, when a portion of gloom passes away from his life, we can turn his thoughts to you; and, perhaps, who can tell? your forgiveness may be fuller than we hope for now. Why, when Hester becomes my wife the whole of life will be gladness."

He felt as if the whole world would be made partakers of the joy he looked forward to. At the least, all his world would be illuminated and

warmed by it; and, in the new summer which would begin for John Morley, it might not be impossible to bring about a perfect reconciliation between him and Rose. The glow of his hope fell for a brief season upon her heart; but it died again, and left a more chilly darkness behind it, when Carl was gone, and she knew that it would be very long before she could see him again.

At the request of David Scott, and with the hearty approbation of Mr. Waldron, Carl preached once more to his first church before leaving Little Aston for London. He knew it well now, with all its foibles and littlenesses. It was no longer an assembly of angels. But it was with a larger charity that he bade it a last farewell. It had already repented of its unfaithfulness and unkindness, and looked back regretfully on its short-lived union with its eloquent young pastor; but the tie had been broken by itself, and could never be reunited. Mr. Waldron felt it, and did not hold his head as erect, or sing with so much energy and freedom as usual; while his daughter listened for the last time to Carl with conflicting emotions of exultation and chagrin.

CHAPTER THE TWENTY-SEVENTH.

AT JOHN MORLEY'S DOOR.

FOR John Morley there had been a brief interval of interest in outer things, and of distraction from his own morbid broodings, during the last few weeks of Carl's residence at Little Aston; but as soon as he was gone, and the old routine closed in upon the house again, the faint throb of quicker vitality died away, and left him more dead than before. Even the fresh enthusiasm and hope of Carl's nature, tinged as they were with the buoyancy of a spirit which has not yet come into very close contact with the real world, had added a deeper shade to his disgust of life. He had looked back and seen, through Carl's eyes, the fair visions which had attended his own early days; and the realities which had met him, in the march of the years, only grew more intolerable in their burden of shame. The malady of John Morley, so long and carefully fostered, had reached a point where it was beyond his own power, or that of any man, to heal. Grant, who had cherished some hope while Carl was in daily intercourse with him, gave up the case in despair. More closely than ever John Morley confined himself to his gloomy and unwholesome parlour, more unwholesome for his soul than his body, and there brooded over the dim memories of his grief.

But they were not dim just then. As if Carl had sharpened in every aspect the keen sword of the spirit, John Morley's brain presented to him clearer and more poignant recollections of the past. It seemed at times as if he almost saw the face of his faithless wife, and caught the echo of her voice

somewhere upon the very confines of his ear. There was a subtle, mysterious feeling of her presence close at hand, haunting him with an undefinable terror. The closed room overhead did not seem uninhabited, though he could hear neither voice nor step in it. Once, before entering his bed-room, he stole cautiously to the locked door, and listened through the empty key-hole, if there were any movement within. No grave could be more silent, and he retreated shuddering. In his chamber he could not banish the impalpable presence. He felt that he had but to strain his sight a little, and listen with a more attentive ear, and he should succeed in seeing and hearing this vague shadow. But dimness of sight, and dullness of hearing, must be closing in upon him in his premature old age; and there was a film, a mist, a nameless terror darkening his mind. His nights were sleepless, and his days fuller of poisoned thoughts. He was like a man smitten with disease, who counts the moments of his fleeting life by the sickly throbbing of his pulse.

Hester was only partly aware of this aggravation of her father's malady. She had more to think of than in the days when she had him alone to study. There was Rose, and there was Annie, who was more warmly cultivating her friendship. Carl, too, claimed a large share of her thoughts. Nor was Robert Waldron forgotten; that would have been impossible. The recollection of him crossed her mind often, and always with a pensive tinge of sadness, which did not amount to sorrow or regret, yet which borrowed a shade from both. Carl was gone away, without speaking any sure words of love, and she saw him no more. Robert had paid to her the greatest and deepest homage by which any man can testify his devotion; and it is not in the nature of a woman to hate or despise the man who truly loves her, whatever may be the character of his faults. He was still at Aston Court. She had seen him, and he had seen her twice, as he was passing Grant's house, and looked up to its windows. She heard very much of him through Lawson's mother. He looked pale and suffering; madame assured her that he was desolated. Amongst her many other thoughts Hester gave a place—a poor, paltry place, Robert would have considered it—to him. It was impossible he should ever rival Carl; but for very pity's sake, and because with Rose always in her mind he could not be far off, Hester often thought of Robert Waldron.

To Robert himself the departure of Carl, and the assurance of Madame Lawson that he had not proposed for Hester, brought a new hope. He knew the flatteries and adulations, so difficult to resist, which would wrap about Carl upon his introduction into the religious world of London; and he trusted somewhat to their seductions to make him forgetful of the grave, quiet girl at Little Aston. If Carl

only withdrew from the field, he could not believe that she would persist in choosing poverty, and debt, and the increasing difficulties of her position, to the bright future he had to offer. He possessed the faculty of burying in oblivion what he did not wish to remember; and he had forgotten the singular solemnity of Hester's rejection of his suit. The fact that she had refused him remained in his memory only as being possibly the caprice of a girl, under Carl's ascendancy. He blamed his father for hurrying him into a premature avowal, which would have been better timed by being deferred a little; but his withered hope bloomed again. There would be need of still more delicate management than before; but after all, in spite of all, his little Hetty should one day be mistress of Aston Court.

"What news of Little Aston?" asked Robert of Grant, one evening, with the carelessness of a man to whom so small a place could yield no news of any interest.

"John Morley is dangerously ill," answered Grant, very gravely.

"Ill! good Heaven!" cried Robert, "what will become of Hester?"

"He is not beyond hope yet," said Grant, "and I shall do my utmost to save him; but his constitution is terribly weakened. To my knowledge, he has never turned the corner of the street since I have been here, except once, to see Carl."

"Is he in bed?" asked Robert.

"To be sure, and the shop shut up altogether," he answered; "it has never done him any good; he is about as fit for business as you are. The place looks more dismal than ever; what with that room which is never opened, where the shutters are falling to pieces——"

"What room?" inquired Robert, as Grant hesitated.

"Oh, a drawing-room or something," he added, "which they say is never opened. But I am in a hurry. I promised Hester to sit up with her father to-night."

Grant left Robert with fresh food for thought. He knew very little personally of the man whom he had injured; years ago he had been Rose's husband, now he was Hester's father. The news of his illness affected him chiefly as it touched his own purposes. He was soon considering Hester's position should her father die, and how it would affect him. He flattered himself that Hester's reluctance to receive his suit arose partly from regard to her father; but his death would remove this stumbling-block—nay, might become a stepping-stone to the attainment of his end. She would be left homeless, penniless, and friendless; and it was incredible to suppose that she would again refuse the lot he would offer her. In his idle and luxurious worldliness, he could not comprehend the possibility of Hester choosing rather

a life of difficulty and trial to his own sphere of untroubled abundance of all things.

He had strolled on unthinkingly until he reached the entrance of the town, just as the clock of the old church struck ten. The streets lay before him, with lights twinkling fitfully in many of the windows. There would be no danger now in walking once again under the walls of Hester's home. He passed on to it, with the impatient swiftness of one who has been long denied a pleasure. The gloom of the evening was deeper there, for the street was narrow and the houses high on each side. He crossed over to the opposite causeway, and looked up to the second storey. He had done so often in the old times, to see if any light shone in Rose's pleasant sitting-room; but the shutters of that window were closed. In the next casement, however, was a wan and sickly gleam, the beacon of illness, the pale watch-fire, where Hester, solitary and uncomfortable, kept watch over the inroads of death.

Why did his treacherous fancy mingle the images of Hester and Rose? He had diligently rooted from his memory all unpleasant and disquieting reminiscences. Yet now, standing in the dark, opposite the house, and looking up to the windows, he felt himself the boy he had been eleven years ago: a boy only. He caught again the oft-repeated apology for the past. It was as a boy he had loved and tempted Rose; it was as a man he loved and honoured Hester.

He stood in the quiet street some minutes, no passer-by coming to disturb him. At length he heard the sound of approaching footsteps, and felt that it was time to move on. He traversed the whole length of the street, and then retraced his steps past John Morley's door. Was he in a dream to-night? Was he the boy of three-and-twenty, or the man thirty-four years of age, weary, disenchanted, with a pricking goad in his conscience which he could not altogether pluck out? To see Hester, only for a moment, would allay this fever of his spirit; and what would be more natural than for him to testify his concern for her and her father? There could be neither harm nor danger in simply knocking at the door, and asking the servant how John Morley was. Perhaps Hester herself might answer his knock, as he could remember her doing once many years before. He called back her image to his mind: a grave, sweet, simple child, who hailed his coming with a demure rapture of delight. If he had only foreseen into what a womanhood this childhood was about to expand! With a profound sigh, Robert Waldron set his foot upon John Morley's threshold, and knocked a low, uncertain knock at his door.

When Rose Morley heard of her husband's dangerous illness, she implored Hester to suffer her to see him at once, lest he should die without for-

giving her. But his malady was more of the mind than the body, and Grant forbade any kind of agitation for him. John Morley's brain was at work with too busy and too perilous an activity. He was neither insensible nor delirious; but from hour to hour his thoughts were flashing, with lightning speed, over all the events of his past life; and his tongue, so long reticent, read aloud the secret records. It was a fever, but not a fever of the blood. The spirit, long kept in check, was at last avenging itself upon its tyrant. John Morley, lying almost motionless upon his bed, with his meagre face and burning eyes turned towards the listener at his side, poured out restlessly the pent-up emotions of his years of silence.

To speak to him of Rose, in the strange fire and fever of his memory, would have been madness.

The only persons he admitted near to him were Hester and Lawson; and to them his tongue ran on, first of all his love to Rose, and of all the torture of despair and shame he had suffered for her. Her name was always upon his lips. There was something of a solemn humiliation in this spectacle of a soul forced at last to make itself known to some other human soul. Neither Hester nor Lawson answered him; and he did not need an answer. The fire within him was consuming him until he spoke with his lips; that was all. They had only to stand by and listen.

It was difficult to Hester to turn from her father to Rose with gentleness. She began to question whether the sin she had committed did not shut her out from all claim to her husband's pardon. When Rose demanded an entrance to his room, with an importunity almost angry, she replied by telling her all that her father had said. Until that moment Rose had not felt the fulness of the wrong she had inflicted upon a nature like John Morley's. She could scarcely hope any more; but she would minister to him afar off, and Hester, sorry for her in her very heart, gave her permission to help in the additional labour of the house.

The servant was gone to bed, and Rose was sitting up by the kitchen fire, waiting to let in Grant, when Robert Waldron's low knock reached her ear. She was scarcely afraid of being recognised now, especially in the dim light kept burning in the entrance. Yet she crept slowly and tremblingly to the door, and paused with her fingers upon the handle before turning it. Who could it be on the other side? And what errand brought them there? It was not Grant, for he was to have tapped softly on the window, lest the patient should have fallen asleep. Her heart throbbed and her lips felt dry. But she fancied the person outside was about to give a second knock, and she threw the door open quickly and fully.

TATTOOING, SAVAGE AND CIVILISED (?).



THE practice of tattooing, or indelibly marking the skin with coloured pigments, is very ancient, and has probably at some period or other been adopted by nearly every nation on the globe. In the south of Europe, Northern Africa, all over Asia, portions of America, and in Australia, New Zealand, and the numberless islands of the Pacific and Indian Oceans, has this practice been followed as an art in some period of their history; whilst among more civilised nations, it is not an

uncommon custom in certain classes of the community, being adopted through motives of curiosity or to gratify some passing whim.

The operation is a troublesome and painful one, but in some countries it is fashionable, and is considered honourable, and what will not people undergo for the sake of vying with their neighbours in ornament and appearance?

The method of tattooing adopted in the present day amongst ourselves does not differ much from that used by barbarous tribes in remote ages, except in the kind of pigment used to produce the stain. In all cases, in order to produce a permanent result, it is necessary to remove the epidermis or outer skin—which is constantly changing, and is partly destroyed at every operation of washing—so as to expose the derma or true skin. This is a thin, delicate membrane, very fully supplied with fine blood-vessels, so that it is impossible to puncture it without causing bleeding; and any stain passing through this membrane will be permanent, and visible through the dry scales forming the epidermis.

The instrument most commonly used is made of three or four needles tied together, and fastened at the end of a piece of wood which forms a handle; but the point of a knife, or a surgeon's lancet, will do equally well. The device to be tattooed is drawn upon the skin, and then by a quick lateral motion, like a prick and a scratch combined, exactly as a surgeon performs the operation of vaccination, the outer skin is removed, and this is continued until the blood exudes over the whole of the surface operated upon. The colouring matter is then rubbed into the exposed skin, and passes partly through it into the delicate capillary vessels ruptured by the instrument. Indigo, Indian ink, and gunpowder are the substances chiefly employed by modern tattooers; but various coloured earths are still used in some countries, and probably were

entirely used among savage tribes—where tattooing was employed for ornament and as a mark of rank and position—before their discovery by Europeans.

After the operation is performed, the parts become inflamed and swollen, and are very painful for some days; the amount of inflammation depending upon the area of skin operated upon, and the extent to which the operation is carried. It ought to be stopped immediately blood is drawn by the needles, so that the pigment injected may remain in the fine veins, and not be drawn into the general circulation. As soon as the inflammation has subsided, and the outer skin has again grown over the place, the design tattooed is shown in permanent colour on the surface of the body, the hue varying from a greenish blue to black, according to the pigment used; and this, if properly performed, will remain distinct during life, becoming very slightly fainter through lapse of time.

We have spoken of tattooing as an art, and this it undoubtedly is among certain nations and tribes, especially in New Zealand and some of the South-Sea Islands. In many cases the whole of the face is covered with well-drawn symmetrical figures; in others nearly the entire body is thus operated on. Darwin, in his Voyage round the World, informs us that at Tahiti he found "most of the men tattooed, and the ornaments follow the curvature of the body so gracefully that they have a very elegant effect. One common pattern, varying in its details, is somewhat like the crown of a palm-tree. It springs from the central line of the back, and gracefully curls round both sides. The simile may be a fanciful one, but I thought the body of a man thus ornamented was like the trunk of a noble tree embraced by a delicate creeper. Many of the elder people had their feet covered with small figures so as to resemble a sock. This fashion, however, has partly gone by, and has been succeeded by others. Here, although fashion is far from immutable, every one must abide by that prevailing in his youth. An old man has thus his age for ever stamped upon his body, and he cannot assume the airs of a young dandy. The women are tattooed in the same manner as the men, and very commonly on their fingers."

M. de Bougainville, writing of Tahiti, says: "Both sexes have a custom of staining their bodies, which they call tattooing; and both men and women have the hinder parts of their thighs and loins marked very thick with black lines in various forms. These marks are made by striking the teeth of an instrument, somewhat like a comb, just through the skin, and rubbing into the punctures a kind of paste made of soot and oil, which leaves an indelible stain."

The same kind of instrument is used by the New Zealanders, most of the South-Sea Islanders, and also by the Chinese and Japanese at the present day. This art is practised as a profession among these barbarous tribes as painting and other decorative arts are in civilised communities, and operators travel about the country for this purpose. Mr. Darwin, in the charming *Voyage* from which we have already quoted, tells us that in New Zealand the wives of the missionaries tried to persuade the native women not to be tattooed, "but a famous operator having arrived from the south, they said, 'We really must just have a few lines on our lips; else when we grow old our lips will shrivel, and we shall be so very ugly.' There is not nearly so much tattooing as formerly; but as it is a badge of distinction between the chief and the slave, it will probably long be practised. So soon does any train of ideas become habitual, that the missionaries told me that even in their eyes a plain face looked mean, and not like that of a New Zealand gentleman."

The degree of rank of a New Zealand chief is indicated by the greater or less surface of skin covered by these indelible marks, and they give to a chief of position a most forbidding and ferocious aspect. When the face is covered, the lines are made to follow the curves of the features, and are thus symmetrical, although complicated; and the play of the muscles being hidden, and in some cases the superficial muscles being perhaps destroyed by the operation, an air of rigid inflexibility is given to the countenance, which serves to increase their otherwise savage and barbarous appearance.

Among some tribes, too, tattooing is the method of recording prizes for agility in running or dexterity in the chase, as well as for warlike exploits, and these, in some islands of the North Pacific and Chinese Seas, take the form of fantastical figures of flowers, trees, and animals. The same method is also adopted by some tribes of North-American Indians, to distinguish those who are eminent for bravery or other qualifications, every instance of heroism being in this way marked by some appropriate ornament.

In Morocco, too, it was formerly the practice for the women, "to add to their beauty, to imprint on their face, neck, and almost every part of their body representations of flowers and other figures," but tattooing among the Moors is now almost entirely obsolete.

In China and Japan tattooing has reached a high state of perfection, though here as in other civilised countries it is not used—or very rarely—as an adornment to those parts of the body usually exposed to view, but rather as a matter of curiosity on parts covered by clothing. There are some exceptions to this rule however. In the island of

Saghalien, for instance, it is very common to tattoo the upper lip all over, of a blue colour. The Japanese, by the use of different coloured clays and other pigments, produce pictures of animals and portraits in the natural hues, with tints and shadings of colour which are quite artistic in character. Many of the operators have a considerable number of designs, by which means they stamp rather than draw the figures, in the same way as the South-Sea Islanders.

In our own country tattooing has for a long time been commonly practised among certain classes of people, chiefly the poorer, and such as are banded together in large numbers, and are at certain times cut off from intercourse with society. That such freaks of folly are not confined to these classes, however, is fully shown by the evidence given in that *cause célèbre* which has, during the past two years, given rise to so much excitement in this country, so that "the tattoo marks" has now become "familiar in our mouths as household words." It is, however, among our sailors, our "navvies" and, strange to say, among our thieves, that we must now look for examples of civilised (?) tattooing.

It is, perhaps, not much to be wondered at that seamen, confined in numbers to a very limited area, and often thrown upon their own resources for a considerable portion of their time, should find some relief for their pent-up energies in tattooing each other.

In some cases, the most elaborate or the most fantastic designs are faintly traced, and with the help of a few needles and a little indigo are indelibly fixed on the skin of the tar who patiently submits to this species of torture. We have seen on the breast of a bronzed and stalwart seaman in Her Majesty's service, in fine dark blue etching, a full-rigged three-decker, with her port-holes, guns, mast, spars, and rigging, correctly drawn, while a somewhat disproportionate cable from the same ship passed over his shoulder and down his broad back, where she was securely anchored. The exuberant spirit of our sailors occasionally finds vent in this way in the most extravagant and ridiculous ideas; but perhaps the commonest "tattoo marks" they indulge in are a ring round the finger and round the wrist, and the favourite anchor on the fore-arm. One or other of these is almost universal.

Jack is also very fond of imprinting the name of his ship on his breast; or if he has the luck to have been in an engagement, he is sure to record the same on his flesh, much in the same way as an Alpine traveller records the ascent of snowy mountain peaks on his Alpenstock.

The arrival of an English ship in Japanese waters is a windfall for the native artist. In spite of remonstrances and threats of punishment from

their superior officers, the young midshipmen, and those sailors whose good fortune it is to obtain leave to go ashore, usually return with a well executed portrait of some fair member of the softer sex imprinted on the arm or elsewhere, which will remain with them during life, often to their great regret in after years, however proud they may be of their achievement before the novelty has worn away. Many sailors are not satisfied with one figure, but have their arms and sometimes the chest more or less covered.

The custom of tattooing is very common among navvies engaged on large railway works, reservoirs, and other undertakings, especially in remote country districts. It does not prevail, however, to so large an extent in this class of men as amongst sailors, either individually or generally, the excavator being usually content with a ring round his finger, or his initials in very rude characters, though if the operator is an artist, or aspires to that position, an anchor or a heart may be attempted. Gunpowder is the substance most frequently used by these people as a pigment, the resulting stain being a bluish black, and very permanent.

It is a surprising fact, that among that portion of the population who obtain a livelihood by helping themselves to goods belonging to others, tattooing is a very common practice. For the sake of their own safety, we should suppose such men would carefully avoid marking their bodies in any way that would help their identification; but criminal


statistics show us that the contrary is the fact, and that they often perversely disfigure themselves by tattooed pictures which remain on them during life. Immediately on the conviction of any person, a full description of marks upon any part of his body, however minute, is duly entered in a "Register," so that should the delinquent at any future time be "wanted," an accurate and graphic portrait of him can be circulated throughout the country, and cases are not rare where, although height, complexion, whiskers, hair, and general appearance might cause suspicion to fall upon a man without being sufficient evidence on which to arrest him, "tattoo mark on right arm—small anchor, with F G below," or some other equally decisive symbol has settled the matter, and led to the apprehension of the party.

Undoubtedly, the most interesting case of tattooing which has engaged the attention of the public in modern times, is that arising out of the trial of the claimant of the Tichborne estates. With the merits of that case we have not at present to deal, but the importance attached to these marks has caused public attention to be drawn to this subject in a much stronger degree than is usual. Most men have been at some period or other of their lives—perhaps most frequently at school—witnesses of, or participators in, some case of juvenile tattooing, but how few think of the important bearing these marks may have on the after life of the person so operated upon!

TWO SONGS FOR A SAILOR.

BY W. C. BENNETT

A KISS TO TAKE TO SEA


 IVE me a laughing parting kiss,
That I afar may be
Blest in the thought you gave me this
To cheer me, lass, at sea.

To tropic calms I'll take this kiss;
In storm my thought 'twill be;

My dreams shall still be sweet with this,
This kiss I take to sea.

Smile—smile, your Ned will you much miss?
You'll sometimes think of me?
And when shall I not feel this kiss,
This kiss I take to sea?

A WIFE'S SONG

 H, winds, tell me where does my sailor sail
The sea;
Oh, would that I could fly to him, wherever
he may be,
But I know, where'er he is, that his thoughts are
still of me,
And it's Oh, that my sailor were home again from
sea!

Oh, he said he'd not be long away when he tore
himself from me;
But long, long have the months been, and I long his
face to see;

Oh, sweet gales, blow him home again, that happy I
may be,
For it's Oh, to fling these arms around my sailor
safe from sea!

Oh, when will that day come? what a moment that
will be!
When his ship comes sailing into port, and his boat
rows here to me,
When, before he's half ashore, I shall clasp him on
the quay;
And it's Oh, that I could keep him, nevermore to
sail the sea!

A CAMPAIGN IN KABYLIA.
THE NARRATIVE OF A CHASSEUR D'AFRIQUE



"HERE IS MADAME WAGNER!"

BY ERCKMANN CHATRIAN

CHAPTER THE SECOND

AT last, at daybreak, I rose up; I fed Negro, and woke up old Lubin, who made haste to give his nag his provender. The chasseurs were already preparing their coffee; Mathis brought

us ours, then having saddled my horse, and my men having mounted their cart, I shook hands with Rellin, and we were at once on our way to Alma—our second day's march

Passing the village, I stopped a couple of minutes

at the "Colon Econome," in hopes of getting one more look at Mademoiselle Marie, and bidding her adieu; but all was silent and motionless in the house, and it was only when we had gone a little further that, turning my head round for a last parting glance at the inn, I saw Monsieur Pouchet opening his blind, and waving his farewell with his outstretched hand. Such is a soldier's life. You arrive with your heart perfectly sound. A pair of beautiful large eyes pierce you through and through. You would give anything to stay, but the bugle sounds, and—*March!* For an hour I could think of nothing else; then my reflections took another turn.

The appearance of the country was changing; brushwood was taking the place of cultivated land along both sides of our way. At one spot, looking round, we distinguished at our left, over the plain, the distant sea and the city of Algiers, with its white houses seen against the blue sky all around the bay. The cart stopped, and my chasseurs and Lubin, gazing on the prospect, sniffed with satisfaction the smell of the sea, borne upon the breezes which came to us in gentle whiffs over the wide expanse.

Then, resuming our way, we arrived at Fondouck, a small village, but girt round with fortifications. A pretty lively business is carried on here in wine and cattle; and we were able to lay in a small stock of potatoes and bacon. But there was no wood, and we therefore left this place, fording the stream which comes down from the Atlas.

But then began our miseries; at every step the way became worse, rocks and rocks followed each other in endless succession; from one rut you tumbled into another. The old horse was soon spent. Lubin swore, the chasseurs halloed, but this did not help us.

To complete our tale of misery, at two kilometres from the village the axle-tree of our poor cart snaps in two; I must return at the gallop to look for a blacksmith, while my chasseurs stand waiting. I am told that there is one further on, on the road we are travelling. I trot back, I find the cart emptied; the miserable beast at last obeys the whip to induce him to move on a little; of course we shout and cry again, and at last it begins to move slowly on, and at three kilometres further on we come upon an old hut, where fortunately we find Rivero the blacksmith, a man from Mahon—a little dark fellow, who is living there with his three children.

As soon as we had arrived our miseries were forgotten, and whilst the bellows were blowing, and the hammer ringing a merry tune upon the anvil, my chasseurs were hunting for wood, and artichokes, onions, and salad in the little vegetable garden behind the hut; others cooked, and soon

a smoking omelette was produced, made from the whites of the artichokes. This was the first I had ever tasted, and I declare to you that it was excellent.

At length the cart was repaired, Rivero paid, and then we started on our road, if that can be called a road where only a few tracks indistinctly marked out the way through cactuses, aloes, lentiscuses, rocks, hollows, and ruts of every size and shape.

In an hour's time we had lost our reckonings completely, and that pleasant refreshing smell of the sea, which we had enjoyed at Fondouck with every breeze, had brought clouds which broke over us with frightful violence.

What an African storm is can only be understood by experience; the incessant rolling of the thunder, the long downfall of torrents of rain, are enough to shake the stoutest heart. And the worst of it was that we should have been very much puzzled to know how to get back, for we had completely lost our way; when, straining our eyes in every direction after the heavy storm, I luckily made out some smoke across the low underwood. We made for the point at once, and in a few hundred yards reached an Arab hut, or *gourbi*, at the edge of a narrow rivulet.

Fancy a charcoal-burner's hovel; in the middle of it a few flaming logs; three or four Arabs asleep, an old woman creeping close to the fire, a young Arab cutting up tobacco-leaves into strips, two lean dogs growling, and a swarthy child asleep upon a sheepskin. In this country this is called a *gourbi*.

It was still raining; and these people waiting for their coffee, and now suddenly roused, were much surprised to see in their midst a quartermaster on horseback, chasseurs with their rifles slung over their shoulders and dripping like water-rats, then the cart with old Lubin in it. Their restless eyes expressed uneasiness.

I asked them for coffee for my men and myself; the young lad made haste to get us some out of their kettle. After this I had only to ask our way, and the poor creatures showed it us through the little villages of St. Pierre and St. Paul.

We reached Alma about six in the evening. This place consists of a long string of houses on each side of the road, crossed by a fine river, about as wide as our Meurthe, and which rushed with great speed over its gravelly bed, in issuing from the mountain's side. On the banks are large wash-houses, where the women are seen on their knees, beating the linen clean on boards, just as they do in France; cattle troughs; a church; a gendarmerie; gardens; inns with large archways, where you may see carriages and people standing. But for the mulberry-trees and the olive-trees rising behind, you might think yourself in Europe.

As the storm had saturated the ground, we could

not bivouac ; and bidding my men to follow me, we found our way to the carriers' inn. This inn was just like ours at home in Lorraine ; there were the barn, the stables, the sheds, the large farmyard behind, full of geese, Guinea-fowls, and common poultry.

I asked the landlord, a young man of thirty, for leave to put up our horses in his stable, and for the chasseurs to sleep in the barn. He willingly consented. After having got rid of their knapsacks, my men thought they would like to fish in the river. I saw no reason why they should not, and they set off.

After having changed my clothes, I went to the contractor to exchange my orders for goods, and to the gendarmerie to get my road-bill signed.

I might here tell you of my happy meeting with Brigadier Lefèvre, a tall fellow of military bearing, and whose heart was ever in his hand, who invited me, according to custom, to take absinthe, and then to dinner ; I could tell you of the return of my chasseurs with a splendid basket of barbel, which they cooked themselves in the laundry ; and then, whilst we were sitting at dinner, in a large room papered with a fine picture of a lion-hunt, the arrival of the brigadier from the heights of the Beni-Aichia, who had the ague, and saw everything in gloomy colours, whilst we were singing jolly catches, and everything looked rose-coloured to us. Of course, I might easily expatiate upon this chapter of our march, and tell you of our visit to the "Sucking Calf," where Brigadier Lefèvre was quite at home ; but these things would take too long too tell.

But there is one thing which I must not omit, and that is the arrival at this place of the schoolmaster Wagner, from Rothau, whom you used to know formerly ; you remember the little Alsatian schoolmaster, with his red whiskers, his wide mouth, and his eyes like a pair of blue saucers.

Brigadier Lefèvre and I were chatting together and laughing and singing, when all at once comes out of a wagon stopped at the door a young woman, with her bundles and her band-boxes. The brigadier cries—

"Hallo ! here is Madame Wagner !"

We help her to unpack ; she is invited to a seat ; and great is our joy ; for a pretty face always gladdens a soldier's heart.

This lady was talking to us about her husband, and their working the great farm of San Salvatore ; I was listening to her, not without great admiration of her rich brown hair, and white teeth, when down comes her husband in another wagon ; he enters, I turn my head, and whom should I see but my old comrade, Wagner of Rothau. Yes ; it was himself ; but he, too, had the ague, and he was as thin and dried up as a red herring.

We recognise each other ; he opens his arms, crying—

"Montézuma Goguel, from St. Dié, as I live !"

And thereupon he bid me salute his wife, which I did with great pleasure.

We drank, we talked of home, of our excursions to Fondoy in the Vosges, at Father Grollier's, the kirschwasser, the nice smoked bacon, the fat larks, the trout, the crayfishes, the delicious white wine of Mutaig, till our mouths watered.

Wagner's wife was laughing, the two brigadiers laughed too, the man from the Beni-Aichia forgot his ague. How could I do justice to my feelings of that evening ? The delight of meeting a friend of one's youth at five hundred leagues from home in the heart of Africa is more than I can express.

Here we stayed till five in the morning, when my chasseurs brought me my horse, the cart, and old Lubin, all ready for a fresh start.

Renewed embracings, and then farewell ! I mounted Negro, and having had no sleep for two nights running, I quietly fell asleep in my saddle, without knowing where we were going.

Fortunately the road is a straight one ; and as from Alma to the river Isser it is thirty-six kilometres, I had plenty of time before me.

Up to the brow of the Beni-Aichia we ascended, and I was asleep ; scarcely did I open my eyes now and then, as in a dream, to become partly conscious of the trees and bushes filing slowly past me. But at the top of the hill the sharp, cool air woke me up completely. The Djurjara, a giant peak of the Atlas, rose before us white with snow, and his great ramparts were spreading beneath our feet, along the plains of the Isser in Kabylia. This region is infested with lions. Africa lay green and smiling before us with her olive woods, her white villages, her mosques, and her blazing sun bathing all in light.

No one would have thought how soon the sword would sweep through these fair valleys, with fire and pillage in its train.

From this point our road lay downward into the plain, leaving on our right that of Constantine, which passes through Palestro, two-thirds of whose population were doomed to extermination before a fortnight had passed away ! We had no suspicion of what was coming ; we went on in full confidence, and about twelve arrived at the Isser, a wide valley where several streams unite and descend into the sea.

We passed over a bridge ; a few metres further on we found the great caravanserai, a vast square edifice, with a court in the middle, and a splendid sycamore-tree at the right of the gate, where formerly the caravans stopped, and now let to a Jewish merchant.

About this building the Isser market is held full in the sunshine. At eight o'clock on Friday mornings it is a silent desert ; at twelve o'clock 30,000 persons are crowding it and trading together.

Oils, and corn of many kinds, tobacco, baskets full of roots, oranges and peaches, mountains of melons, booths five or six shelves deep loaded with game, are all heaped up together on this vast trodden-down field. The Kabyles bring here their oxen, their mules, their mares, their asses; Jews are here in crowds, arguing and debating, just as they do at home; the Kabyle mountaineers listen in silence, with a frowning aspect; Caid's are gravely traversing the crowd, mounted on superb horses; spahis in scarlet cloaks are moving amongst them, to maintain order amidst this crowd.

At five, not a soul is left! It is all over. Thousands of sparrows, darting out of the caravanserai and the great sycamore, quarrel over the remains of the feast that are left for them.

Such is the market of Isser, one of the principal ones in Algeria.

As it was not Friday, all was quiet when we arrived. We halted at the wooden public-house kept by Monsieur Paul, a very good fellow, but so worn out with age that he could scarcely stand. At this inn some officers were staying on their way from Dellys to Dra-el-Mizan, and it was full of people. We had to look out for another lodging further on, and were at last able to get shelter.

I put up my horse in the stable, and my chasseurs began to make their soup.

Here I was informed that at the caravanserai there was a quartermaster detached for duty with three men and six horses. Of course, I buckled on my sword, and started off to see who it was.

The Jewish trader, who kept a Moorish café at the entrance, took me into the court of the caravanserai, which is surrounded with buildings, the roofs of which incline inwards to the court, and the walls of which are everywhere pierced with loopholes. He pointed out the stables to me, and the place where the detachment were lodging; and imagine, if you can, my satisfaction at finding there in a little chamber, hung with smoked meats, and almost lined with bottles upon shelves, my old friend Collignon, busy putting his papers to rights. Fancy our mutual greetings, and the jollification which followed! I must not stop to tell you these things, however agreeable it may be to drink with an old comrade, and to talk of friends and neighbours that you have not seen for years. It would be pleasant to write to you about these things, but you might think me rather too much given to gossiping, and therefore I will proceed.

Next morning, while taking a parting *petit verre* with Collignon, I could not but notice the prevailing uneasiness in people's countenances and conversation. Some traders from Dellys, who had come to market, were mentioning, at the inn, fires which had been seen in the direction of Aumale, market houses destroyed by the Kabyles, and other injuries done.

Those people now and then cast a glance at me, to see what effect this news might produce upon me, but I only laughed at their dismal tales. I am not accustomed to trouble myself about evils before they come.

It seemed to them that the twelve native spahis, commanded by a native quartermaster, appeared not to believe much in the safety of the caravanserai, and the Isser market, and one of them at last said to me—

"Quartermaster, let me advise you what to do. Your next march is to Azib-Zamoun, only sixteen kilometres from this place—a fine road all the way. Well, I think you had better remain here until twelve. French soldiers, even but five of them, would inspire more confidence than these spahis."

"Come now!" I replied; "do you take me for a fool? My orders are to be at Azib-Zamoun before twelve. Suppose anything happened to my detachment; would you answer for them?"

At that moment my chasseurs were arriving at the door upon their cart. I came out, shaking hands with Collignon, and bestrode my horse, which Father Lubin, standing by, was holding by the bridle; then we started.

They tell that when terrible things are going to happen the earth trembles, and the sun hides his face; and other tales of the same kind, to show Nature's horror at the wickedness of the world. I can only say that the weather was beautiful, and the larks were singing up in the sky, as if nothing unusual was preparing.

We passed quietly through the small village of Bordj Menacl; then we began our ascent along a road bordered by corn-fields at each side, up the steep height of Azib-Zamoun.

I remember now that at the end of an hour's march we observed, at the right-hand side of the road, a pretty European house, such as a retired tradesman would enjoy living in—a garden in front, enclosed by palisades, beds of artichokes, cauliflower, cabbage-lettuces, radishes, and with a verandah before the door, quite hidden under convolvulus, honey-suckles, and other flowering climbers hanging all round it.

The orchard was full of European trees: there were cherry, plum, and apple-trees, and orange-trees in full bloom.

I pulled up to look at this charming residence. My men saw nothing but the artichokes, and one of them said, "Quartermaster, it is an earthly paradise—if one could but get in!"

But there was a palisading all round; and, besides, I could espy through the flowers, sitting under the verandah, a black-bearded gentleman, with piercing eyes, who did not look a likely man to allow himself to be robbed of his artichokes.

So we pursued our way, and I have since learned

that they were the road and bridge surveyors who lived there. But I also learned a few days afterwards that that pretty place had been plundered by the Kabyles, its trees cut down, and several of its inhabitants killed.

Men act with the deepest villany towards each other. Let them find a nest full of young ones, and they will leave nothing of it but blood and scattered feathers.

Pursuing our way we came to Azib-Zamoun, where we pitched our tents. I filled up my cheque for our rations, and then went myself to the inn-keeper and contractor, Monsieur Boucher.

But scarcely had I opened my lips to ask for our supply of provisions and fodder for the horses, when this Monsieur Boucher broke out into a furious rage, abused our army as a worthless encumbrance, and charged us with all the misfortunes of the country. Presently his wife came to help him to load us with insults.

In a very short time I got angry, and shouted to them to hold their tongues, or I would have them both lashed with the ropes that we had brought to tie up our provender with, and have them brought before the Governor of Tizi-Ouzou, who might listen to their abusive language if he pleased.

Then at last they subsided, and delivered in the goods in exchange for my orders.

On my return to the bivouac, after eating our soup, and seeing that there were eight hours of daylight left, I decided upon doubling our march to reach Tizi-Ouzou that night. We raised our little camp, and as we were passing out of the village, the Bouchers, man and wife, stood shaking their fists at us.

I laughed aloud at them.

These poor creatures fell afterwards into the hands of the Kabyles, and must have had some sad thoughts; by that time they must have found out that but for the soldiers their shop would not be worth much.

Such lessons cost dear; but men, as it happens, learn best by experience.

From Azib-Zamoun our road lay through the wide-spreading valley of the Sebaon, an impetuous stream, always almost dry in June and July, but bordered at all times with reeds, tamarisks, and other plants. The barren, scrubby mountain-tops of Kabylia were spreading far away over our heads; the river was rolling down into the plain.

As we advanced, the features of the landscape became more and more striking; a little to our right, standing out against the blue sky, shone the white walls of the National Fort, and the clearly defined road which winds in zig-zag to its gate; before another summit at our left glittered the Marabout Dubelloi, a little Arab hermitage distinguished by its crescent.

When we had passed the marshal's camp, and

the little village of Vin Blanc, we discerned at last, at the foot of those colossal mountain masses, upon a gently rising ground, the *bordj* or fortress of Tizi-Ouzou.

In Africa the air is much purer and more transparent than in our misty climate, and objects can be made out at great distances. This fort, built upon a low hill scarcely higher than the fields of corn and barley, with its white-washed wall three yards high, did not look at all imposing. In spite of my good-will, I formed at once a very poor opinion of it, the more because it hid from us the European and Arab villages, both lying on the other and furthest slope of the hill; so that I could not help fancying the weary time we should have of it.

But we should never despair; and presently I will tell you of the most unexpected entertainment we received at Tizi-Ouzou to spend our time upon.

Before reaching the fort we had the pleasure of seeing the very beautiful fountain made by the Turks during the time of their occupation of the country. It lies on the left, somewhat below the road, and is surrounded by substantial masonry, even with the surface of the ground, and shaded by two splendid weeping willows. No water could be clearer, cooler, or sweeter than this, and those two fine willows, drooping their long branches and their pale foliage over the basin, produced an admirable effect.

Almost every passer-by dismounts at this spring to water the mules and the horses. We did so too, and about six o'clock we arrived at Tizi-Ouzou, at last perceiving, on the opposite slope of the hill, the European village, with its wide street, its church, its square bordered with lime-trees; and, built on the side of the Dubelloi Mountain, the Arab village, its mosque, the governor's house, where lives Caïd Ali, and all deeply embowered in the foliage of the orange-trees, the fig-trees, and the oleanders.

This prospect was a cheering one, and I promised myself often to visit both these villages.

The fort itself, with its three gates opening towards Algiers, Bougie, and the Arab bureau, commanded the whole neighbourhood. The centre of it is the old fort, heavy and massive, built by the Turks, of quarried stone, twenty to thirty feet high, and furnished with embrasures. Around this central fort had risen a number of military works: the powder magazine, the hospital, the engineering works, two officers' tents, two long barracks of one storey only, answering the double purpose of storehouses and soldiers' lodgings; the whole was surrounded by a wall, several of these buildings being themselves fortified, their windows facing the country strongly barred, and their only doors opening on the interior.

SIGHT *VERSUS* SOUND.

IN TWO PARTS.—PART THE FIRST.



AD I entitled this paper "A Voice from the Dumb," it would have been in no sense a misnomer, since its object is to briefly describe a method of teaching the deaf almost to hear, and the dumb to speak, which, although it has been more than once brought before the public—in particular by Mr. Dalby, Aural Surgeon to St. George's Hospital, at the meeting of the Social Science Association at Leeds, 1871, and by Dr. Dasent, the well-known author, at a meeting of the Society of Arts, in January of last year—does not seem to have yet attracted anything like the attention which its merits deserve. I refer to what is known as the "German" system of educating deaf mutes, by which they are enabled not only to understand ordinary conversation, but to return audible and distinct replies; in fact, to sustain a dialogue with at least as much facility as ordinary mortals attain in the use of a foreign tongue. This may seem somewhat startling, but those who will accompany me to No. 12, Fitzroy Square, where a school has been opened by the Association for the Oral Instruction of the Deaf and Dumb, under the direction of Mr. William Van Praagh, will, I think, soon have their doubts set at rest, and resolve to do what in them lies to assist so practical and promising an effort to alleviate the sad lot of a class of unfortunates numbering, it is calculated, over 20,000 in the United Kingdom alone.

Assertions as to matters of fact are easily verified or disproved, but as facts which are opposed to our preconceived notions of what is possible are often very reluctantly received, I may as well prepare the way for my brief narrative by shortly explaining why there is nothing at all incredible about it. (I was present at a semi-scientific discussion lately, when a gentleman stated that certain undoubted but quite unexpected facts were found on investigation to be quite in accordance with theory—which was very satisfactory.)

It was formerly the prevalent idea, and may be so still amongst the ignorant, that dumbness and all minor imperfections of speech arose from some defect in the vocal organs. One of my own earliest recollections is that of having my tongue and palate carefully examined by the family doctor, with the view of ascertaining whether any slight operation would cure me of stammering; and I well remember the feeling of relief with which I heard the announcement that there was nothing the matter, and

that consequently surgical skill could do nothing to remedy the defect. However, what the lancet could not accomplish was achieved by patience and care, and long before I was eight years old the bad habit, for it was nothing else, was cured. In the same way it is now quite established, that in ninety-nine cases out of a hundred, dumbness is simply a bad habit, or rather the absence of a good one, and arises from the child never having been taught to speak, in consequence of the usual channel of communication through the ear being unavailable. Nevertheless, speaking is simply an art, which, like any other, may be acquired by the deaf if carefully instructed, though, of course, not with the same readiness as if they had the aid of a good ear, by which to correct their early efforts at pronunciation. Strictly speaking, most children are not taught to speak at all, but simply imitate the sounds they hear, and to which they soon learn to attach definite significations; and when it is remembered that the connection between the auditory nerve and the muscles of the lips and tongue is anything but a direct one, it is marvellous how closely children *do* learn to imitate minute shades of sound—as shown by the prevalence of the same dialect or accent in particular districts—though little or no rational instruction is given them.

This idea, that speaking, like reading, might be taught to the deaf, is by no means a new one, for so early as the year 700 we read that John de Beverley, Archbishop of York, taught an adult mute to read from his master's lips; and again, in 1570, Pedro de Ponce, a Spanish monk, taught several deaf mutes to speak. The first systematic effort to introduce this system, however, appears to have been made in the latter half of the seventeenth century, when John Wallis, Professor of Mathematics at Oxford, and William Holden, Canon of Ely and St. Paul's, paid great attention to the subject, and the former corresponded upon it with the celebrated Robert Boyle, and also with Dr. Amman, a native of Switzerland, then residing in Holland, who practised the system with considerable success. It was further improved and perfected by Heinicke, under whose direction a public institution was established in Leipzig in 1778, by the Elector Frederick Augustus of Saxony, and he is therefore generally regarded on the Continent as the founder of the system. It spread rapidly in Holland, Germany, and Austria, until there are at present a hundred or more institutions where it is practised, and hence the name "German" has become associated with it.

I should mention here, however, that the peculi-

arity of the German system does not consist in *teaching* the deaf and dumb to speak (since that was done to a considerable extent by Dr. Watson, the founder of the Deaf and Dumb Asylum in the Old Kent Road, and the same thing has been continued more or less by his successors), but, in *making* them speak, by allowing no other mode of communication. Here it is that a difference of opinion exists between the advocates of the German system and some of our English deaf and dumb teachers. The latter contend that only a few pupils of more than average intellect are able to learn the arts of speaking and lip-reading, while the former assert that, except in cases of organic defect, which are very rare, all deaf mutes can acquire both these arts, and that failure only arises from making them accomplishments, extra the ordinary method of talking with the fingers, which being more easily learned, if taught at all, the pupil will rest satisfied with, and will not give the requisite amount of attention to master the more difficult but infinitely more useful mode of conversation.

I must confess that when, some years ago, I read a statement that some one—in America, I think—although stone-deaf, could, by watching the lips of the reader, understand a newspaper when read aloud, I put it down in my own mind as a gross exaggeration; but subsequent consideration, aided doubtless by having witnessed very similar feats, has convinced me that there is nothing approaching the miraculous in such a performance. What do we do when listening to a speech or reading? We distinguish a multitude of minute differences of sound, not because our ears are good, but because they have been trained to the work; for the very same sentences which convey distinct ideas to our minds, and fill our breasts with emotions of admiration, horror, or indignation, would appear to a person having equally good hearing, but ignorant of the language, a mere jumble of incoherent jargon. Nay, more, as many an Englishman abroad discovers to his mortification, a person may be able to read a language with ease, and yet be totally incapable of understanding it when spoken.

Every shade of articulate sound which reaches our ears is produced by a particular arrangement of the vocal organs, and when the eye instead of the ear is trained to watch these differences, why should it not be as delicate of perception, and interpret them as accurately? No doubt the visible differences are in some cases very minute, and as there is no standard of comparison by which to judge things intrinsically different, we cannot say with certainty that they are in all cases greater than the auditorial, though a consideration of the scientific theory of sound would rather tend to that conclusion; but when we bear in mind that the deprivation of one sense generally produces greater acuteness in the remainder, as shown by the ex-

treme delicacy of perception possessed by the blind, even to the distinguishing of different colours by the touch, it will not seem at all impossible that those who are deprived of hearing may, if necessary, have their visual faculties considerably developed and improved. But it is very doubtful if even this is at all necessary. The power of seeing, like that of hearing, depends more upon training than natural ability. A savage will detect the track of his enemy, or of game, with a certainty which to the European borders on the supernatural; but at the same time he cannot distinguish one portrait from another, and would be totally unconscious when looking at a page of even large print that one line was at all different from the rest. On the other hand, to say nothing of experts in different branches of commerce, who recognise the most minute shades of quality or colour in silk, cotton, wool, precious stones, and other articles, any one who reads a Bible in diamond or ruby type distinguishes much more minute differences of outline than would be presented by his own lips in reading the same passage aloud.

Lastly, the modern science of philology, which derives Latin, Greek, German, and all the Aryan tongues from Sanscrit, or its predecessor, clearly proves that sound is not sufficiently distinctive, or the human ear not sufficiently acute, to preserve, unless aided by a written standard, even the language in daily use from constant corruption or change. Familiar instances of the same truth present themselves on every hand; the speech of the illiterate in different parts of the same country is almost incomprehensible to each other, and the public-house sign of the "Goat and Compasses," of which I noticed a pictorial representation at the corner of the Euston Road, has been derived from the Puritan "God encompasseth us," simply because the ear, and not the eye, has been relied on.

Having thus, I hope, shown, if perhaps somewhat superfluously, what may be expected, let us go to Fitzroy Square, and see what is accomplished.

School work begins at 9.30 a.m., and with intervals of half an hour for recreation or gymnastics, and an hour and a half for dinner, is continued according to a regular time table until 5 p.m. The children then go to their respective homes, or, in the case of those whose parents reside at a distance, to lodgings approved by the committee; for this establishment is by no means an asylum, and the aim being to fit the pupils for ordinary social life, it is not considered wise to exclude them, during the time when impressions are most vivid and the intellect most receptive, from all intercourse with their fellow-creatures. On the contrary, the aid and co-operation of their parents and friends is invoked, to assist by all possible means the course of instruction given at school.

EUPHROSYNE; OR, THE PROSPECT.

BY ROBERT BUCHANAN.



REED from the taint of fleshly clay
 (So the prophetic legend ran),
 As pure as dew, as light as day,
 Shall rise the Soul of Man."—
 I read; and in the shade by me,
 Sat golden-haired Euphrosyne.

Around our shaded orchard seat
 The boughs stirred scented in the light,
 And on the grass beneath our feet
 Lay blossoms pink and white;
 I held the book upon my knees,
 Translating to Euphrosyne. *

'Twas an old melancholy rune,
 Writ by a Norseman long ago—
 Sad with the sense of stars and moon,
 Sea-wash, and frost, and snow—
 A vision of futurity!
 And wide-eyed heard Euphrosyne.

"Stately and slow the heart shall beat
 To the low throb of Time's soft tide,
 And shaded from the solar heat,
 The Shapes walk heavenly-eyed"—
 All round us burnt the burgeon'd lea,
 And warmly sighed Euphrosyne

"All shall be innocent and fair,
 Dim as a dream the days shall pass—
 No thought of shame shall whisper there,
 No snake crawl on the grass"—
 "How happy such a world would be!"
 Sighed beautiful Euphrosyne.

"Flesh shall be fled, sense shall be still,
 The old grey earth buried and dead;
 The wicked world, with all things ill—
 Stone, rock, and tree—be fled."—
 "No earth, no world!" softly sighed she,
 The little maid Euphrosyne.

She clasped her hands, she cast her eyes
 Over the landscape bright with May—
 Scented and sweet, 'neath azure skies,
 Smiled the green world that day—
 Loud sang the thrush, low hummed the bee,
 And softly sighed Euphrosyne.

"Sickness shall perish, grief and pain
 Be buried with the buried life;
 The aching heart, the weary brain,
 At last shall cease their strife."—
 The grey tome trembled on my knee,
 But happy sat Euphrosyne.

"The luminous house wherein we dwell,
 The haunted house of shame and lust,
 The new-born spirit's fleshly shell,

Shall crumble into dust;
 The flower shall fade, the scent fly free!"—
 She trembled now, Euphrosyne.

Her warm, white bosom heaved in sighs,
 I felt her light breath come and go,
 She drank, with glorious lips and eyes,
 The summer's golden glow;
 She felt her life, and sighed "Ay, me!"
 The flower of maids, Euphrosyne.

"And with the flower of flesh shall fade
 The venom'd bloom of earthly love,
 No passion-trance of man and maid
 Shall taint the shapes above,
 Flesh shall be fled, sex shall not be!"—
 I paused, and watched Euphrosyne.

Her hands were folded round her knees,
 Her eyes were fix'd in a half-dream;
 She shared the flame of flowers and trees,
 And drank the summer gleam;
 "Kiss sweet, kiss sweet!" upon the tree
 The thrush sang to Euphrosyne.

A little maid of fifteen Mays,
 A happy child with golden hair,
 What should she know of love's wild ways,
 Its hope, its pain, and prayer?
 "No love in heaven?—how strange 'twill be!"
 Still musing, sighed Euphrosyne.

"No thoughts of perishable mould
 Shall taint the life of heavenly rest,
 But larger light, more still, more cold,
 More beautiful and blest."—
 Her heart was fluttering close to me,
 And quickly breathed Euphrosyne.

"There shall be no more love!"—but here
 I paused, for from my side she sprang,
 And in her bird's voice, bright and clear,
 Of love's young dream she sang—
 "Oh, close the foolish book!" cried she,
 The happy maid Euphrosyne.

I closed the book, and from my hold
 She took it with her fingers white,
 Then down the path of green and gold
 She tripped with laughter light—
 "The book, not the glad world, shall be
 Deep-buried," said Euphrosyne.

Within an old tree's hollow hollow,
 Into the darkness damp and green,
 She thrust it, closing up the hole
 With sprays of lilac sheen—
 Then all the radiant flush of glee
 Fast faded from Euphrosyne.

Pensively in the summer shine
Her blue eyes filled with tears of bliss :
She held her little mouth to mine
In one long heavenly kiss—
"I love the earth, and life, and *thee*!"
She whispered, my Euphrosyne.

Sleep, to me, within thy dark green place,
With flowers and fruit for epitaph !
Kind heaven, stoop down thy silent face
To hear the earth's glad laugh !
Smile, with your glorious eyes on me,
O child of joy, Euphrosyne !



"SANK DOWN BESIDE THE BED"

HESTER MORLEY'S PROMISE.

BY HESBA STRETTON,

AUTHOR OF "THE DOCTOR'S DILEMMA," ETC. ETC.

CHAPTER THE TWENTY-EIGHTH. FACE TO FACE.

FOR a minute or two Rose Morley and Robert Waldron stood face to face in silence, feeling as if they had met in another world. Yet it was the old place, the door she had opened to him so often, the threshold he had crossed with guilty feet. There was the difference only 'twixt now and then ; but the woefulness of the change was in Rose. He stood there, still handsome, almost 'young, with the air and mien of a man with whom all the world was pleased ; and she confronted him, motionless,

nearly lifeless—a faded, withered woman, bowed down with the world's censure. He closed his eyelids, as if to shut out a vision so repugnant to him ; but Rose, with eyes that would not blench, gazed steadfastly and mournfully into his face.

"Hush !" she whispered in a guilty tone, and with a gesture of silence, such as she might have used in the former days, "he is sleeping, perhaps. Follow me softly. There is nobody to see you."

He would have given worlds to escape from this interview, yet he had no power to resist. He followed her reluctantly, watching her now with keen

eyes, which would not allow him to pass over any change in her. It was the same Rose, but with no more bloom or sweetness. The poor shrivelled hand was trembling, the face was marked and sallow, the slender and graceful figure meagre and bent. Her eyes only were the eyes of Rose, though their deep blue was troubled with shame. She was leading him through the house, and across the court, when the flame of the candle she carried flickered in the wind; he could see how transparent her hand was as she curved it round the flame.

Where could she be taking him? He climbed a steep staircase after her, and the light fell upon the swarthy leaves of ivy about the door; and then he remembered the melancholy little room opposite Hester's window, which had once oppressed and fascinated his attention. Had Rose been in the house at the time when John Morley nearly murdered him? Was it possible that she had even then been concealed so near to him, in a refuge of which he could never have dreamed?

This refuge was a mere, bare, comfortless cell in his eyes. The poor pieces of furniture, provided by Hester with so much difficulty, looked mean and scanty. The two chairs, the table, the pallet-bed, a book or two upon the narrow window-sill, a basket of work—this was all the room contained. The walls were dark with smoke, and the low roof was not celled. There was not a loft over the stables at Aston Court, which was not better fitted for a human dwelling than this. Yet this was the home to which Rose Morley had been brought down by him.

He had not spoken yet; he could not speak. Could this monstrous dream be by any chance a reality? His conscience also was so diligently at work among the records of the past, turning back to old leaves which had long since been pressed down, that he was unconscious of his own dumbness before this awful apparition of his first love. If she had kept silence, he would have sat mute for hours, gazing at her in blank bewilderment.

"You have found me out," she murmured at last, in a voice of fear, "and there is no help for me but to throw myself upon your mercy. Do not drive me from here; do not betray me. Nobody knows I am here, except Hester and Carl Bramwell. If you ever had any love for me, leave me here in peace."

"Here!" he repeated, casting round the poor place a glance of disgust.

"Yes, here," she added vehemently. "Why, it is a hundred times better than the place to which I might have fallen through you. Do you know who has saved me, and gives me now this refuge? It is Hester. But for the remembrance of her, the good little child I had forsaken, I might have fallen lower than I did. I owe all to Hester—my little Hetty."

Her voice, broken and trembling, fell into sobs,

until she could speak no more. The name of Hester brought Robert back to the present, and his deep, absorbing love for her, so widely different to his fitful and poisoned passion for Rose. What influence had her presence there upon Hester with regard to him?

"How long have you been here?" he asked in lowered tones, as if afraid of being overheard. "I have sought for you everywhere. I could not endure to think of you in poverty, without a home and without friends. Why did you never let me know where you were? It was cruel to me."

Still thinking of himself, he asked this last question in a tone of so much tenderness, that Rose trembled and flushed a little. A last gleam of the good-tempered vanity of her girlish days flashed across her saddened heart.

"Why have you never married, Robert?" she asked. "I could have been happier and more contented if you had been married. Have you never loved any one—" but me? she could have added, but her lips only moved, no sound came through them.

"Yes," he answered briefly; "I have loved."

"And would she not marry you?" asked Rose, as soon as the spark of jealousy which his words had kindled had died away. "Is it possible that any woman could say no to you?"

"I love Hester," he said again, with the short, sharp utterance of one in great anguish of mind.

"Hester!" she echoed, "Hester!"

She could say no more; but she sat silent for a few minutes, thinking of what might have been had she but resisted temptation eleven years before. She saw herself John Morley's honoured and happy wife, the wife of a prosperous and happy man, the mother of Hester, about to become the mistress of Aston Court. A phantasmagoria of brilliant scenes, in which she played a prominent part, passed before her. The life that would have been, but for her sin, was a hundred-fold better suited to her than the one she had chosen for herself.

"Oh, Robert!" she cried, "what can be done?"

"Nothing!" he said in an accent of bitterness and despair, "nothing! I know now that Hester could no more love me than an angel could come down from heaven to me. How could she, having you before her eyes?"

He had almost told her that his chief hope had been to discover that she was dead; but he stopped himself in time. It was not in his nature to hate her, as some men hate the woman they have fancied they loved. He was sorry for her, but he was still more sorry for himself.

"Robert," said Rose, "we neither of us knew what we were doing, when we sinned against a man like John Morley. It has been well-nigh the death of his soul, as well as mine. But I think, now, I am a better woman than I was then. Look

away from me, look away from me. I wish to tell you what I think God has done for me, and I cannot bear your eyes to look into mine while I speak of Him."

She was silent again for a moment or two, sitting before him, with bended head and closed eyelids, as if searching into her own soul with a keen and unsparing scrutiny. His eyes were riveted upon her in spite of her appeal. A feeble smile played once more about her pale lips, and her eye-brows expanded as if some pleasant thought had come to her amid all the pitiless shame and trouble of her interview with him. She was once more something like the Rose he had known.

"I believe," she said softly and solemnly, "that He has forgiven my sin, for the sake of his Son. I believe that when the woman who was a sinner stood at the feet of Jesus, weeping and washing his feet with her tears, He saw me there; and it was of me, as well as of her, He said, 'Her sins, which are many, are forgiven.' I believe that."

She raised her eyes to him, with a serene and hopeful light in their blue depths. Yet even as he dared to look in them for a moment, the tears came across them and dimmed them.

"But my husband," she said, "does not forgive me. He has treasured up all our sins, and now he is counting them over one by one, while he is perhaps dying. Do you know that he recollects each day, as if it were only a week ago, and he keeps on saying, 'On such a morning he came here, and I heard Rose singing to him in the drawing-room; or, 'Such a night I found him here when I came home from chapel.' Oh, it is horrible! He must hate us with a terrible hatred. If he should be lost, it is you and I who have brought his soul to ruin."

"No, no. He is a good man," muttered Robert.

"He was a good man," she continued mournfully. "He was so good himself that he thought no evil of you or me, though he took so much notice of all we did. But all these years our crime has come between him and God. Do you suppose he would not have rejoiced in your death or mine? They say he was almost guilty of murder. And now he is going to die!"

"He is not going to die, my poor Rose," said Robert.

"I wish I could die for him!" she exclaimed. "I should not be sorry to die. It would be well for me to be out of the world altogether."

There was a passion of mournful pathos in her words; and Robert Waldron could have cast himself at her feet, and hiding his face in her lap, have given way to an agony of grief and repentance. It was true that he had not known till now what he had done. Till this moment, he had not seen the blackness of his transgression. At times, when he had been himself low-spirited, or when the even

tenor of his comfort and well-being had been infringed, he had experienced what he had been pleased to call repentance. But it was now, looking at Rose, and thinking of John Morley counting over his wrongs perhaps in the very hour of death, that his real remorse began. There stole a subtle and fine sense of his speechless anguish over Rose.

"I thought never to let you know," she said, "but now I see you again—it must be for the last time—I cannot help telling you. I have a child."

"A child?" he repeated.

"Yes," she said, believing she was giving him the only consolation in her power. "You shall see her some day. I thought you should never, never know; but perhaps it would be wrong to keep her all to myself. She thinks her father is dead and in heaven; you must never tell her different. She is about as old as Hester was when I was married. You remember little Hetty?"

Remember her! He had done nothing else these months past. There was no consolation or relief in the thought of their child to him, as there was to Rose; it only deepened the heavy cloud which hung over him.

"I have called her Hester," said Rose, after a pause, for he had not answered her last question. Robert bowed his face upon his hands and groaned. This then was the Hester who was to belong to him—his own child, who was never to know him as her father. But for Hester Morley, grave and gentle and sweet, with all the simple grace which satisfied his taste, the innocent and saintly maiden who would have helped him to save his own unstable soul—this Hester was lost to him for ever by an irrevocable forfeit.

"My punishment is greater than I can bear," he cried bitterly.

"No," she said, "your punishment is not so great as mine. Think of it. You are rich and honoured, and no one casts a stone at you; while I am a beggar at my husband's door, and he does not know that I am fed by his hand. If he knew he would fling me as a worthless thing into the street, where every one who passed by would revile me. Yet I think our sin was equal. But I don't know. No; it was more evil in me than in you. Let my punishment remain; I deserve it all."

Robert Waldron scarcely heard her. The sound of her words passed through his brain without making any impression there. This woman beside him, who had laid her thin chilly fingers upon his hand, had but a small share in his thoughts. He could no longer endure her presence. He must be alone to taste, drop by drop, the dregs of the bitter cup which he had first drunk hastily in his youth. He rose abruptly, and said that he must leave her.

"It is the last time you will ever see me," said Rose calmly.

"No," he answered; "we must see one another again."

"You do not know what you say," she added. "There is peril in this house for you and for me. It can never happen again that we can meet as we have done now."

She had opened the door, and was holding the light while he prepared to descend the crazy staircase, so shading it with her hand that the rays fell on him and the steps he had to tread upon, while her own face was in shadow. She glanced round the sombre court for an instant. A light shone in Hester's window opposite, and the face of Lawson pressed eagerly against the panes, watching Robert making his slow and cautious descent. But he had not seen *her* yet. With a smothered cry of dismay she let the candle fall from her trembling hold, and hurrying on down the familiar staircase, she put her hand upon Robert's arm, and led him in darkness and silence through the house and into the street beyond.

"We have been seen," she whispered, at the door. "I do not know what may come of it. Only I would rather die here in my husband's house, than be cast out once more into the world."

He was about to answer her, to utter some words more pitiful and gentle than any that had fallen from his lips during their interview; but Rose drew back, and closed the door once more between them. He did not suppose there would be all the difficulty and danger she imagined in seeing her again; but dismissing her easily from his thoughts, he went home, mindful only of Hester and the child that bore her name, with a heart so heavy that it seemed impossible for the weight to be lifted from it by any event of the future.

CHAPTER THE TWENTY-NINTH.

A FRUITLESS EFFORT.

JOHN MORLEY'S illness, though dangerous, was not of long duration, and he appeared to recover from it perfectly. But the deep fountains of his trouble had been stirred too greatly to subside quickly into their former monotony and stillness. He grew restless and unquiet—the disquietude of a man who is looking for some event to change completely, either for good or ill, the current of his life. In vain Hester sought to soothe this strange mood. Grant bade her desist from all effort to do so. It was, he said, a crisis in his mind's history, from which he might come out a new man, with a hale and happy old age lying before him. There was nothing for them to do but stand aside, and look on at the strange conflict.

"Hester," said John Morley, one evening just before sunset, "bring me my hat. I am going out for a walk."

Hester could scarcely conceal her surprise, but she brought him his hat without venturing a word of comment. He stepped across his threshold with a dizzy sense of bewilderment, and turned his steps mechanically towards the chapel, feeling his way before him with his stick as if he were blind. The wind played in his long white hair, and breathed coolly upon his fevered face, for there was still a low subtle fever burning in his veins. At the chapel porch, where the doors were closed, he arrested himself and stood upon the lowest step, looking about him with an air of confusion and questioning. What had he come here for? What was he doing? Where was he going?

He remained just within the portico for some minutes. He had come to the end of the bound he had set for himself and kept to during many years. Beyond this limit, he could just catch a glimpse of trees, with their green branches waving and beckoning to him with gestures of welcome. He saw the level sunbeams burnishing richly the topmost leaves, and the evening song of the birds reached his ear. He reared his bended figure, and lifted up his snow-white head. Had he been blind and deaf to these things, and was he now going to hear and see once more? Was the invisible Christ touching with a Divine finger his ears, his eyes, and saying, "Be open?" Was the hand of Christ about to loose his burden, and take it away from him for ever?

He felt the wooing of the gilded branches and the singing of the birds through every nerve; but he could not break through the unseen barrier which lay between him and them, which he had himself erected in his despair. Until this hour he had not wished to pass beyond it. It was the lost Paradise, but he had never turned longing eyes upon the cherubim and the flaming sword which kept the gates. He did so now; he desired ardently to cross the boundary; but whenever he thought of quitting the familiar portico his feeble limbs trembled, and his sight grew dim. He wished he had brought Hester with him, that he might have leaned upon her arm, and gathered courage from the tender serenity of her face. The passers-by stared curiously at him; but they were few, and did not long interrupt his thoughts. Yet he grew ashamed of being seen there; and when some children turned riotously out of the court opposite, he resolved to retrace his steps homeward.

He said never a word to Hester when he re-entered; but he went back to his old arm-chair, and set a book open before him, and ran his paper-knife along the lines, as if, like a child, it was needful to keep the place where he was reading by pointing to it. The depths had closed over him again, after parting and giving him a brief glance of something better lying beyond them. He was

laid once more in the lowest pit, in darkness, in the deeps.

What his eyes read he did not know, though the lamp lighted up the page clearly. Hester went in and out, uttering no word to disturb him; but at last he felt her hand upon his shoulder, and he raised his dim despairing face to hers. Her eyelids were red with many tears, and her lips trembled as she spoke very slowly and distinctly, as though what she was about to say would astonish and perplex him.

"Father," she said, "do you think you could do without me for a day or two? I must go to London."

"To London!" he repeated, yet with no more than a vague listless surprise, amounting almost to indifference, in his manner.

"Yes," she replied. "I cannot tell you why now, but you shall know some day. Carl has written for me to go there quickly. I must go to-morrow morning."

Her abrupt sentences were spoken with difficulty and deliberation, but he scarcely noticed her agitation. He always left Hester to her own judgment, and he did not think of demanding any explanation from her. The authority of a father over a daughter had never been assumed by him, and he had no energy to assume it now.

"I shall see Carl there, perhaps," she said, as if to reassure herself and him; "but I shall come home on Monday. I must be at home again on Monday. To-morrow is Saturday, you know, so there will be only Sunday between. I have given Jane all the directions she needs; and Lawson's mother will come down to stay with her. You will not see either of them. It will be exactly the same as if I was here, only I shall be away."

She spoke, however, in a tone of much trouble and anxiety, and her eyes wore a look of uncertainty.

"I am going to see some one who is ill," she continued; and John Morley shrank painfully from her. "You are willing for me to go? You can trust me to do what is right? You will say, 'God bless you, and go with you?'"

"Ah!" he answered, putting his arm round her neck, and drawing down her face to his, "I could trust you with my own soul, Hester. Do what seems good in your sight; and God bless you, and be with you always, my daughter."

"Father," she said eagerly, "I wish I dare tell you all now. Is there anything I must not speak of yet?"

He fell back from her again, holding up his hand with a gesture of terror. He knew well how he had poured out his heart before her during his illness, but he had drawn into himself once more; and he could not bear to listen to any reference to the past from her lips.

"Spare me," he entreated, "at least to-day. When you come back—when you have been to London and seen her, perhaps then—if she is dead—you may tell me all."

Again Hester hesitated. She longed to disburden her mind of the secret, which had weighed heavier since Carl left, but she dared not. She saw that her father believed her journey to London was to see Rose, and to see her as one about to die; and yet there was no softening of his voice or face as he spoke of her. It would be impossible to confess the whole to him at the very moment when she was about to be absent from home. She must wait till the right time came for her to give him the explanation she had promised. Her absence would be but a short one; it could be but short, for there was urgent need for her constant presence at home.

CHAPTER THE THIRTIETH.

ALONE IN LONDON.

THE cause of Hester's hurried journey to London was a letter which she had received from Carl, telling her of the existence of Rose's child, who had lately broken a blood-vessel, and was lying in a dangerous condition in her dreary school-home. True to the large pity and tenderness of her nature, Hester at once resolved to go up to London without inflicting this additional pang upon Rose, and see for herself what could be done for the forlorn little creature.

The train by which she travelled left Little Aston at midday, but did not reach London until the evening. She had provided herself with the address of a boarding-house kept by a former inhabitant of Little Aston, and had decided to go to it at once for the night. She had Carl's address also; but she could not go to him, though her heart sank a little when she found herself alone at the entrance of the busy terminus, with a maze of streets stretching before her. It was Saturday evening, and her unexpected appearance at that hour would embarrass him and disturb his thoughts, set upon the subjects of to-morrow's sermons. To save Carl the mere chance of feeling her presence a distraction, she was willing to encounter any difficulties herself. Besides, she was in the same place with him; and she had no idea of the extent of the overgrown City. He might be dwelling in any one of these houses which she was passing, and it might be that his eye would fall upon her, if he chanced to look out through his study-window.

This thought caused Hester to slacken her quick footsteps, and to tread the crowded pavements with more leisure—the leisure of a half-born hope. From time to time she inquired the way, and found herself more and more entangled in the busy streets. To call a cab would have been simply

impossible to the country girl. But as long as the light lasted her pleasant thought remained. Twilight would draw Carl to his window to catch the last rays of day. Carl loved the dusk. But then she looked round to see what twilight and dusk were in the streets of London. The lamps were already lit, but there was a thick darkness gathering in the big streets, where the shadows flitted to and fro, which gave her a vague, oppressive perception of the vastness of the place, of the myriads of human souls closely surrounding her, of the great heart of anguish throbbing in the bosom of the City. Hester felt her own heart heaving and throbbing with a troubled and mysterious sympathy. The tears smarted under her eyelids; and now that Carl's eye could not recognise her in the growing darkness, she drew her veil over her face, and quickened her wearied footsteps.

She reached her destination safely, but worn-out and foot-sore. It was a dingy house near Holborn. She entered under a deep archway, shut in at night by large doors, and kept by a watchman.

Solemn silence reigned inside, and the sky lay low and flat across the roofs of the buildings, which rose to four and five storeys. The watchman pointed out the house she wanted; and in a few minutes Hester was received and welcomed with something more than the usual hospitality of a lodging-house landlady. A guest from Little Aston, as she announced herself in trembling accents, was always doubly acceptable; and very soon she felt more at home than she could have believed possible.

The school where Carl had told her Rose's little girl lived was in a street leading off from Oxford Street; and Carl's chapel lay beyond, near Hyde Park. Hester lay awake almost all night thinking over her plans, and listening to the solemn boom and hum of the great clock of St. Paul's, sounding through the stillness which seemed to her at last to have fallen over the turmoil of the City. She set out again early in the morning, with minute directions from her landlady. Her rigorous sense of the sanctity of the Sabbath, which was kept with Puritanic preciseness by the church at Little Aston, prohibited her to enter any conveyance which would have carried her any part of the distance. It was, too, an early hour of Sunday morning, one of the quietest hours that ever fall upon those weary streets; and Hester felt a kind of enjoyment in her novel position—alone in London, and yet near to Carl.

She reached, after a long walk, the street and house she sought. It was a dull, dirty house, with the words "Ladies' Seminary" upon the wire blinds of the windows in the second floor. It looked a melancholy place to enclose a child's life; yet it was not more melancholy than the home where she had grown up. Her memory ran rapidly

over the past; her heart melted with tenderness towards the child, who had known the same loneliness and the same desertion from which she had suffered, with the dumb sufferings of childhood. She saw a servant moving about in the underground kitchen, and Hester bent down to the half-open window, and called to her softly. The girl looked up with the weary air of one who had been sitting up all night, and came to the area steps.

"You have a child here," she said, "who is very ill. Can you let me see her?"

"I don't know," said the girl, with the caution of a town servant. "Where do you come from?"

"From the country," answered Hester; "a gentleman, who comes to see her often, sent for me. His name is Bramwell."

"All right!" said the girl; "he promised to send a nurse, or somebody."

She eyed Hester scrutinisingly, nodded her approbation, and then ascending to the street door, admitted her into a narrow passage.

"How is she?" whispered Hester.

"Oh, she'll die!" answered the girl; "if she don't die, I don't know anything about dying; and I've seen three of my own sisters go out like the snuff of a candle. And such a dear little thing as she is, so loving and patient! I've sat up with her all night, and there's nobody belonging to her to be with her at the last. I don't know whatever the world is made of, or what it was made for, or where we are all going to."

"Dying!" exclaimed Hester.

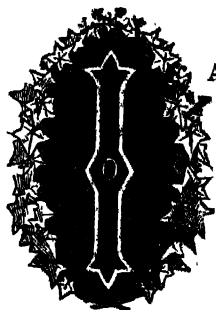
"Yes," she said vehemently; "and nobody takes any notice, and nobody believes me. They can't bear the trouble and bother of her dying, and they are afraid of it injuring the school; so they just shut their eyes to it. They'll be pretty well taken to when she does die."

"I should like to go to her at once," said Hester, with a sob.

"You can come, and you'll be all by yourselves, I promise you, this morning," she replied; "the young ladies nor my mistress don't get up on a Sunday till it is near time to go to church. Mr. Bramwell said he'd send you; and I'm glad you've come, if nobody else is."

She led the way up two dark flights of stairs, and into a small room at the back of the house. It was almost filled up by a large canopy four-post bedstead, with heavy moreen hangings; lying upon which was the small spare form of a child, with its meagre face and bright eyes turned anxiously towards the door. The forlornness of this little creature, dying alone and unloved, her very death unnoticed, smote Hester to the heart; and she sank down beside the bed; and hid her face from the searching and unquiet eyes of Rose Morley's desolate child.

A FEW HOURS WITH A PORTER.



AM a porter on one of our largest railways, and am employed at one of the numerous metropolitan stations, at twenty shillings a week. I generally have twelve hours' duty every day, sometimes more; I get about every third Sunday off, and make myself as comfortable as circumstances will permit.

I arrive on the station at nine o'clock, as I am on middle shift, and am sent at once, with others, to sweep the platform, which is much littered with the refuse from the early morning trains that have conveyed hawkers, and goods of all descriptions.

While I am so engaged, a lady says, "Is that the train for Dewly?" pointing to an empty carriage train.

"No, ma'am, the train for Dewly is not made up yet; it doesn't start till ten."

After finishing my sweeping I go into the hall, and wait on passengers arriving for the ten o'clock. A passenger arriving for Allingby, I label his luggage while he takes his ticket; he is followed by the cabman, who demands sixpence more than he has received.

"You kept me more than a quarter of an hour in Piccadilly." "No, I didn't." "Yes, you did." "Give me your number." "Give me your address." "35, High Street, Allingby." "And am I to come there for my sixpence?" And here our detective steps up: "Can I do anything towards settling this as detective?" The passenger turns on his heel, simply ignoring him; and the cabman, who has quite lost his little remaining temper, says, "If you interfere with me I'll punch your head," and walks off leaving the detective panting and gasping at his audacity.

After seeing this passenger installed, I return to the hall and wait. A party of passengers arriving for Clide, I put their luggage, of which there is a tremendous lot, on a large barrow; unfortunately, as I am wheeling it towards the train, a rug falls from the top of the luggage on to the platform, doing it no harm whatever. "You clumsy fellow! why don't you look at what you're doing?" "It's quite an accident." "Nonsense; you should take more care and then such accidents wouldn't happen;" and so saying, he leaves me to put his luggage in the van, which having done, and taken the small things to the carriage, he further lectures me, and winds up by giving me sixpence, and bidding me be more careful in future.

I go to the hall again, give some assistance in carrying an invalid lady into the train, and go out again just in time to hurry up another passenger, and get him into the train. It starts, and before it is quite out of view the head shunter comes up, bringing with him the lady who wanted to go to Dewly.

"She got into our empty carriage train, and was taken down to the washing shed," said he in answer to my look of inquiry. "You told me it was the train," she says. "I?" "Yes, you; and now I've missed the train, when is the next?" I tell her there is only one train a day to Dewly, and that one has just gone.

"I'll report this to the station-master," she exclaims, and she does; but he, on receiving my explanation, tells her that she is mistaken, on which she flies into a dreadful passion and bounces out of the office, declaring her intention of writing to headquarters.

I now go to the arrival side to meet the incoming trains, and the first to come is the express from Rollington. While attending to one lady entirely unaccompanied, I am called by a gentleman who is in attendance on a lady, and who says, "Porter, how much longer am I to call you?" "When I'm finished here, sir, I'll attend to you." "You needn't trouble yourself; I don't think you'll attend anybody here for long," and he walks away to report to the station-master my insolence, as he terms it.

A little lad is crying on the platform. I ask him what is the matter, and he says, "Father was to meet me here, and I can't see him." "Well, don't cry; come and wait a bit." I take him to the porters' room, give him a bit of something to eat and a book to look at, and come out again.

"Porter," says a very gentlemanly-looking man, "put my portmanteau and hat-box into the cab." I put it in, but just as he is being driven out of the station, our detective stops him and detains him till another passenger comes up, breathless, and claims both portmanteau and hat-box, gives our gentlemanly friend into custody, and appearing against him at the police court next morning, gets him three months.

The station-master gives me a telegram from Seldon, in which we are instructed to weigh a certain passenger's luggage and charge. I find the lady, and inform her that there will be ten and sixpence to pay for her luggage. She demurs, but on being told that her boxes will not be allowed to leave the station till paid for, finds the money. The passengers having all gone, I assist in unloading the milk cans, and sweeping the platforms, which

latter job is nearly always done after the arrival of a heavy train.

After the regular arrival and departure of a few suburban trains, all of which I attend, the great bell announces the arrival of the parly from Killingly. Scarcely has the bell finished ringing, before the great train rushes into the station, and then commences a scene of bustle and confusion seldom, if ever, equalled at any other station; passengers shouting, porters running to and fro, vainly endeavouring to perform the numerous duties required of them, passengers hailing cabs, and cabbies hailing their passengers, render the confusion complete.

"Porter, there's my box." "Where, ma'am?" "In the van—a black one with brass nails." After hurting myself in the legs, by getting this particular box out while the crush was on, she says, on finding that it is not hers, "No, no; how silly you are! The one above your head." I manage to get that out, but fail to get her a cab, as they are all engaged, at which she grumbles and abuses the management in no measured terms. "Porter, have you seen a little boy come up from Dwyford by this train?" "No, sir; there was one on the last; if you'll wait a minute I'll take you round." "Porter, assist my servant to put my luggage on to the brougham;" but I and the servant, in putting the luggage into the basket-sort of thing on the top, manage to slightly scratch the door, at which the gentleman breaks out, "You clumsy asses! Why on earth don't the company have some men, not a lot of apprentices? Bah!" and slamming the door, he is driven off.

As I am searcher on this train—i.e., search the carriages after the passengers leave, and before the cleaners go in—I find an umbrella or two, a bag, two caps, a paper of biscuits, a cigar-case, and an eye-glass; these I deposit in the cloak-room, so that they may be given up if claimed. I take the father to his child, who seems well pleased to see him. The man evidently wants to pay me, but as I can see that he is none too well off, I decline and say, "I really mustn't, sir, we're not allowed; much obliged all the same." It being midday, and most of the porters gone to their meal, I am detailed off to take charge of the cloak-room while the man there has his dinner.

A scaman is the first to claim his effects, that he has left there for seven weeks, the charges on which amount to twelve shillings and sixpence. "Why, that's more nor they're worth." "That I can't help; that's the charge, and it'll have to be paid before they leave." "Well, I shall leave 'em; they ain't worth taking out at that price." "All right."

While I am here the advices and inquiries from the different stations arrive: "Sir, inquiry is made for Mr. Smith's cigar-case, Russian leather, with

lady's portrait. If it has found its way to your C. R. I shall be obliged by your forwarding it early;" and as it was found in the parly, I do it up and send it by next train. "Sir, inquiry is made for Mrs. Waters' black bag, steel chain and snap; send early if in your hands;" and as I cannot find it, I write across the inquiry note, "Not here." I make out the daily list of lost property, and forward one to the general manager, and one to the Railway Clearing House. "Has a parcel been left for Mrs. Holdsworth, from Blankton?" "Yes, ma'am, twopence to pay." "I came in by the parly, and I must have left my umbrella in the carriage; have you got it?" I ask for a description, and finding that I have nothing to tally with it, I say that I haven't got it, but will make inquiries.

Considerable trouble and annoyance is given by careless people who lose their cloak-room tickets, all of whom have to sign a declaration before receiving their property—which they don't always receive, by the way.

The proper man having returned from dinner, I take advantage of the time to get my own, which is waiting for me in the porters' room, having been brought from home by my little girl. After I have finished I am sent off with one or two more to dust and clean the station-master's office out; and having finished that job, brushed and cleaned myself, I go to the hall to assist passengers arriving for the 2.50 express.

Three passengers shortly arrive for Ellisdean; I follow them to the booking office with their luggage; two of them are rather queer, and supporting the centre one, who is dreadfully tipsy. "Three for Ellisdean." "No, I can't," says the clerk; "he can't stand alone." "Oh, yes, he can," and in proof of their assertion they leave him alone for a second, and he utterly collapses; the clerk then positively refuses, and I put them in the cab again, and they drive off. I next assist a lady who is going to Pilford, and among her luggage the handle of a perambulator packed up is distinctly seen. The excess luggage officer tells her that she will have to pay two shillings and sixpence for the perambulator, when she says, "No, oh no; the wheels are off, I sent them by goods, so you can't charge for it;" but the smile, brought up at the idea of tricking the company, fades from her cheek when she is told that her luggage has been weighed and there are five shillings to pay for it, just double the amount she would have been charged for the perambulator, had she paid without grumbling.

After seeing her into the train, and hearing her complain of the extortion, as she terms it, I go back to the hall and assist a regular passenger and his three daughters to the train, supply them with separate foot-warmers, receive sixpence, and return to the hall.

But my day is not yet ended.


A CAMPAIGN IN KABYLIA.
THE NARRATIVE OF A CHASSEUR D'AFRIQUE.



"UNDER SHELTER OF THE STACKS."

BY ERCKMANN-CHAPRIAN.

CHAPTER THE THIRD

 UR comrades received us with open arms, and the rest of the day was spent in talking over the news.

The detachment of the First Regiment of Chasseurs

at Tizi-Ouzou consisted of a lieutenant, a sub-lieutenant, three quartermasters, two buglers, a blacksmith, sixty men, and seventy horses.

My comrade, Quartermaster Ignar, was on duty that week. I made acquaintance, the same day,

at the canteen, with Quartermaster Deschar, a fine, brave soldier, for whom I have always felt the greatest respect.

The next day, after our mess, Deschar, who had been in the artillery, and myself, both smoking our pipes, made the round of the fortress; for my first act, on arriving in any new place, is always to see where I am. From the ramparts, there lay in all directions a wide prospect, along both sides of the valley. Deschar explained it all to me.

"There," said he, pointing up the road, "there is the National Fort, at the distance of twenty-six kilomètres* by the road, but in a straight line not more than ten or twelve. It is armed with six rifled guns, and garrisoned with eight hundred men, and is supplied with water from an excellent spring. It is to be regretted that we have no spring water; we have only tanks; and our water may be cut off without much difficulty, which would be very awkward during the great heats of May, June, and July. Between the National Fort and ourselves, at the bottom of that ravine, runs the Qued-Aissi, a small river rising in the Djurjura, and the water of which is as clear and cold as if it had just welled out of the rock-spring; it is full of good fish, as you will see by-and-by. The Qued-Aissi winds away behind that hill and falls into the Sebaon; at the confluence of the two rivers is the Arab village of Si-kou-Médour, to which we sometimes have a march-out. All the mountains round about us are inhabited by Kabyles; and it must be acknowledged that these men fight well. They are tribes of warriors, especially the Beni-Raten and the Maatka. Look on that ridge. Don't you see the low white walls among the trees and bushes? Would you not think those were hawks' nests? That is the village of Bou-noum. The Kabyles never build villages as we do by the river-sides; they build retreats in the mountain-peaks; their women prefer fetching water in their pitchers every day at a distance of three or four miles; and the men would rather go up and down the hills a thousand times with their loads of oil, fruits, and vegetables than trust themselves within our reach. I have even been of opinion that they never trusted anybody, neither the ancient Romans, nor the Arabs, nor the Turks. They have always more confidence in their rocks than in the words and promises of generals."

"That is a mark of great want of confidence."

"Yes, quartermaster, and yet we cannot say they are altogether in the wrong, for generals and emperors have been known to break their word. These Beni-Raten, these Maatka, and all the other Kabyles live, therefore, up in the air, and only pretend to submit when they know themselves the weakest. Up in their villages, where the huts are dropped here and there without any order, like

molehills in a field, they manufacture all they want—yataghans, rifles, powder and ball, and even bad money. As they refuse to trust us, we cannot be expected to trust them."

"I am quite of your mind. What is that I see down there?"

"That is the European cemetery, surrounded by a low wall. And that road winding through the valley is the mule-road to Dra-el-Mizan—further on we lose sight of it in the deep gorges of Maatka."

"And this, quartermaster, behind the hospital?"

"That is the burial-place of brave men. There lie the French who were slain in 1857, at the capture of the fort of the Beni-Raten, when we completed the conquest of the country. Lower down, where the drainage from the fort comes out, is the soldiers' garden, now let to old Antonio, a good fellow, who sells us vegetables for our ordinary use; besides which he keeps a small public-house, where now and then we get a glass of absinthe."

Deschar was favouring me with all this information, and much besides, as we walked round the parapets. Then we came down into the village by the Bougie gate, and got a few pints of beer at the sign of "La Femme sans Tête," no great way from the soldiers' stables. The beer of this country is not to be despised before the month of May, and then you cannot always be drinking absinthe and vermouth.

So there we were, leaning with our elbows on the table. I was looking out of window at the people coming and going in the street. Within an hour I had seen the black-bearded young curé pass by, with his three-cornered hat under his arm; then a pair of nuns with the white band over the forehead, on their way to the girls' school; and the schoolmaster Deveaux, formerly a sergeant of Zouaves, whom my friend Deschar called in by tapping at the window, was glad to accept a *petit verre*, without sitting down, before he opened his school. The brigadier of gendarmes came in to have a look at the new arrivals.

What surprised me most of all was to see the forest-keeper, Nivoi, an old grey-headed man, and very deaf, who watched the forests belonging to the State in these parts. He, too, came to get a little refreshment across the counter, with his gun slung over his shoulder.

Then I thought to myself, "Why, Tizi-Ouzou is but an outlying part of France, where we have all the same people as at home—the curés, and the chères sœurs, and the forest-keepers, and the gendarmes; as for the insurrections, the fires, the market-houses razed to the ground, the Beni-Raten and the Maatka, they are all a ridiculous practical joke—nothing more."

I even felt vexed. I found all these people's countenances so quiet and peaceable, that I said to myself again—

* Sixteen miles.

"Goguel, you are a fool to believe all the tales that you hear; if these folks had any cause of uneasiness, wouldn't they look very different? Oh, come, come! there's nothing the matter at all. The game has been put off for a long while to come."

But I was out in my reckoning. Hasty judgments are not to be depended upon.

On Sunday, the 9th of April, Quartermaster Ignar, of the fourth squadron, finished his week of duty, and now it was my turn.

All went on quietly till the 12th. On that day I had to walk out the horses on the road to the National Fort. The chasseurs asked my permission to go as far as the Mill of St. Pierre—a few kilomètres from the fort—and I consented.

It is a French mill upon the Oued-Aissi, worked by Algerines. Their agent was there, with his wife and his sister-in-law.

So we rode pleasantly down the ravine, which is luxuriantly planted everywhere; the trees are tall and handsome, the cultivation high, and the whole prospect is cheerful and pleasing to the eye.

The agent, a kind-hearted man, showed us his whole establishment with every attention; after which we came back at the trot, for I was afraid we might have gone too far, and would be late back; but we reached home in time for dinner; and that same day, whilst we were all busy rubbing down in the stables under the fort, down the slope of the hill, Lieutenant Wolf, from the Arab bureau, arrived accompanied by a few horsemen.

"Look well to your horses," said he, "and let them have a good feed; for there is every probability that you will have to be in the saddle to-night."

He went off, and the whole afternoon the place was in a stir.

The old spahi brigadier, Abd-el-Kader Suleiman, who had been for years connected with the Arab bureau, arrived at the top of his horse's speed at five in the afternoon. The noble animal's mane was flying wildly; his long tail swept the ground. The rider looked no less excited, with his grey beard in unwonted disorder, and his camel-hair scarf loosely rolled around his white hood. I cried to him—

"Well, Abd-el-Kader, what news?"

"Don't stop me, quartermaster," he replied, halting for just a moment, and, in doing so, throwing back his horse almost on his haunches. "Caïd Ali has revolted. Monsieur Goujon, the interpreter, went to speak with him last night, and we are afraid that he and his two spahis have been kept prisoners."

And he urged his horse again on his journey at full speed. I followed him at a distance, and at

the moment I was entering in at the gate of Bougie, he was already at the bureau of Commandant Leblanc; he sprang on his horse and passed me like an arrow shot from a bow.

You have never seen a horse thoroughly in hand unless you have seen an old Arab horseman flying down such a hill as that at full speed.

Whilst he was on his way to carry orders elsewhere, I went up to our mess-room, where I found Quartermasters Ignar and Brissard.

"Goguel," said Brissard to me immediately, "here is news; the lieutenant has ordered me to give him a list of all available horses, to make up three packets of cartridges per man, to prepare orders for six days' rations, and to hold ourselves in readiness to start at any moment."

"Very good," said Ignar, "and now we shall get about and see the country; in three days we shall be at Aumale."

I did not agree with them; and I told them that Caïd Ali had revolted in our own neighbourhood, which would make it unnecessary for us to go any further.

"What can Caïd Ali expect to do with his big corporation?" said Brissard. "How can that fat pumpkin be kept on horseback?"

I remarked that Caïd Ali would have no need to march at all; and that he had two brothers-in-law, Mokrani and Saïd Caïd, who would come out in his place.

Upon this Brissard went out to complete his preparations, and about seven o'clock, Lieutenant Cayatte and Sub-Lieutenant Arissy came to give us notice that in an hour we must be ready, and that we should be in all forty men.

They recommended us especially not to run, to make no noise, to avoid all that might arouse the enemy, and to be prepared for combat after having laid in six days' provisions.

After these orders every man went about his own business to make ready, and at eight o'clock, after mustering, our officers divided the men into two companies of twenty men each, the first commanded by Lieutenant Cayatte; Brissard and Ignar being quartermasters; the second by Lieutenant Arissy, and myself as non-commissioned officer.

We were to leave in the fort behind us fifteen chasseurs, a hundred and four mobilised men from the Côte-d'Or, five artillerymen under the command of a brigadier, and twenty privates commanded by Quartermaster Deschar, who held at the same time the post of adjutant.

The commandant-in-chief of the place was Monsieur Leblanc, the head of the Arab bureau of Tizi-Ouzou. The Arab bureau consisted of Monsieur Sage, captain; Wolf, lieutenant; Laforcade, sub-lieutenant; and Monsieur Goujon, interpreter, a very active young man. Add to these one guard

of engineers, one guard on the battery, a young assistant surgeon-major, fresh from college, and Monsieur Desjardins, and all are told.

At half-past eight, every man being at his place in the ranks, Lieutenant Cayatte gave the word of command to march, and we began to descend the hill into the village. Crossing the high street, Lieutenant Arissy asked me if I had room for his flask anywhere. A Chasseur d'Afrique is never without a little corner for his flask. We halted for a moment at the door of the café Thibaud. Mademoiselle filled the flask with eau-de-vie, and offered us a *petit verre* of cognac, after which we rejoined the detachment, which was pursuing its way in silence along the high road.

A dark night came on; and a short distance further on we took the road to Si-kou-Médour, fording the Oued-Aissi. The horses were up to their saddle-girths in the water; the reflection of the stars trembled in the waves.

After reaching the other bank, for more than half an hour we had an almost impracticable road before us, beset with immense cactuses, whose sharp points pierced our clothes and drew blood; but we went on without a complaint.

About eleven, the dogs of Si-kou-Médour warned us by their barking that we were turning the village; we were at no great distance from it, and a few minutes after, we came out from that painful stage of our march, upon a wide and undefined plain, as well as I was able to judge in that dark, wet night.

Here the lieutenant ordered us to draw up in two ranks, then to dismount, and picket and tether our horses.

This being done, he called us, the three quartermasters, and told us to inform the men that we should pitch no tents, light no fires, and that they must make no noise.

"The horses," said he, "are not to be unsaddled—only unloaded; every man, after having loosed his horse's bridle, will lie close to his horse, his sword buckled on, his rifle under his hand, the bridle round his arm, to be ready to bridle and mount at the first signal. Of course, two sentinels will be placed, and will be relieved every hour. One of you will remain at the horses' heads for two hours, and a brigadier will station himself behind them at the same time; each man will take his turn at this duty. I will stay awake while Monsieur Arissy rests; then he will come to relieve me. At four in the morning the horses will have their rations, the coffee will be made, and at five we shall be in the saddle again."

After these orders I took my first watch, the lieutenant lighted his pipe, and when the horses were seen unloaded, silence fell upon the whole camp.

Night was very dark; we could hear the

waters of the Sebaon rushing over its stony bed, and at a greater distance the packs of jackals howling to each other across the valley.

The silence was also broken occasionally by the neighing of the horses, which sometimes bit and fought with each other, sometimes too by the cries of the chasseurs, suddenly awake, who began to abuse and threaten them.

At the end of my two hours, I went to awake Ignar, who lay asleep in his cloak. He is a very good fellow, but for all that he took it on himself to pretend, while shaking himself awake, that I had not given him five minutes' sleep.

Corporal Péron went also to awake his comrade, who, by what I could hear, was in no better humour than my friend was.

At last I lay down at my horse's side, and went to sleep.

Day-break was just beginning to tinge the mountain summits, when my chasseur Capel woke me.

"Here, quartermaster," said he, holding out to me a good quart of coffee, "this will warm you."

Immediately I got on my legs and looked around me; we were very near Si-kou-Médour, whose mud-cabins, thatched with reeds, and whose little gardens separated from each other by huge cactus hedges, lay only at fifty paces from us. We were occupying a narrow plateau behind the village, where a few stacks of straw were standing, fenced round with thorns.

A few officers from the Arab bureau, who had arrived after us during the night, had taken up their quarters under shelter of the stacks; their spahis were prancing on horseback around them.

A crowd of Kabyles in groups of fifteen or twenty, habited in their long white burnouses, and their long rifles slung over their shoulders, were coming down from the neighbouring mountains. These were our own contingents, professedly come to support us.

I could see all this at a glance.

The children from Si-kou-Médour came, too, to mingle amongst us, and were watching us like little magpies, whilst the women congregating around observed us from under their veils, and the storks from the house-tops kept their eyes upon us too.

I had never seen so many storks in my life as there were there.

I swallowed my coffee, then I joined in tasting the contents of Lieutenant Arissy's flask; and I called my comrades, who wished him good morning.

Lieutenant Cayatte came up immediately after; he ordered the horses to be laden again, their nose-bags to be removed, the ropes and the pickets to be taken up.

The sun was shining in his glory. In all those Kabyles who were gravely advancing and halting a

few paces from the bivouac, I felt no confidence whatever. Presently the officers of the Arab bureau began to distribute cartridges among them; mules with further supplies were still arriving, and the distributions went on.

The spahis, whose spirits were rising at the appearance of so many friends, were chattering with them; and I said to Abd-el-Kader, who was approaching on horseback, offering him the flask at the same time—

"I say, corporal, what is the meaning of all these Bedouin fellows coming about us? Where do they drop from; and what do they want with us?"

He, looking furtively all round, to make sure that no one was observing him, raised his arm, took a good pull, then slowly passing his hand over his long grizzled moustaches, returned me the flask and replied—

"Caid Ali has revolted with all his village of Temda; so you see, quartermaster, we have given notice to all the other tribes to send us men to help us to pillage. These are our friends! We shall march in front, as usual; they will follow behind. Caid Ali may probably fight, and we are distributing a few cartridges among these men to load their guns with. There will be a razzia," he added, smiling.

"But suppose our friends turn round upon us?" said Brissard.

"There is no danger of that, you will see. The women and the children have already left Temda; we shall plunder everything, and then burn the village. There are plenty of cattle at Temda; if I get a bullock, my friends the chasseurs shall have it."

Such was the opinion of this veteran spâhi of the Arab bureau. He had seen atrocities of every description for thirty years past, and yet he was suspecting no harm this time. Then he darted away to meet fresh groups of Kabyles, and to show them where the cartridges were being distributed.

After a few minutes Lieutenant Cayatte formed us first into fours and then into twos, and placed himself at the head of the column, with a horseman at his side from the Arab bureau, who was to act as our guide; and so we proceeded quietly across the scrubby brushwood, until we reached the line where the new road is marked out from Tizi-Ouzou to Bougie.

Two or three hundred Kabyles were preceding us; but noticing that the great body of them were not following, the lieutenant halted the column, and the guide turned back to see what was delaying those men.

He returned to inform us that the Kabyles were dividing themselves into two columns, one of which was skirting the foot of the mountains of the Beni-

Raten at our right, the other the banks of the Sebaon at our left. He added that these two columns would join us before we reached Temda.

The lieutenant, satisfied with this explanation, after having made us dismount to tighten our girths, again gave the word to advance.

We were proceeding thus, without haste. The road, which is but laid out as yet, follows that magnificent valley of the Sebaon in its whole length; on each side rise high mountains dotted with olive-trees, out of which peep the white walls of the Kabyle villages.

This was a magnificent sight under the slanting rays of the rising sun.

The Sebaon, almost dried up, had left three-fourths of its bed bare and dry, and covered with boulders white as marble; on the side that we were advancing on, the deeper water was winding against the steep bank amongst tamarisks and oleanders. From time to time, flights of teal, widgeon, storks, and other aquatic birds rose at our approach and vanished in the distance. The two columns from the Arab bureau, having at last made up their minds to move, were accompanying us at a considerable distance—the one in a long file, under the shadow of the mountains; the other on the pebbles and shingles of the river-bed, full in the sun. They had the appearance of an escort.

The march had proceeded thus for an hour, when we discerned at a distance of five or six kilometres before us, across the valley, a high hill on the left, entirely bare of wood, and covered with green corn.

The Sebaon made a circuit round the foot of this hill, which was swarming with thousands of Arabs.

At the top of a gentle elevation on our right stood an Arab horseman in a black burnouse, and mounted on a black horse.

As soon as this man saw us in the distance, he galloped down the hill and joined the rebels.

No doubt the guide must have told the lieutenant that "here was the enemy," for these words were repeated down the line to the rear-guard in which I was riding.

In twenty minutes we reached the elbow of the river, in this place about half a mile wide, its bed being of hard gravel; and the width of running water only about ten yards, flowing against the bank on our side. We forded this narrow stream, and on the bed of the river itself we formed in order of battle—the first company to the front; the second, which was mine, to the rear.

A few hundred yards in front of us, at the foot of the hill, lay a great orchard of fig-trees, in which we could distinguish five or six Arab horsemen riding to and fro. I was told that these were part of the family of the revolted Caid.

MY FRIEND'S ADVERTISEMENT.



THE interest that is now taken by the public in the various questions regarding the education and employment of women induces me to record the suggestive experience in relation to this important subject which a friend of mine lately, and quite unexpectedly, acquired.

Last winter, being obliged by indisposition to resign for a time the duties of a laborious profession, he came to London, and placed himself under the care of an eminent physician; hoping at the same time to derive benefit from rest and change of scene.

Picture his desolation! Here he was, the head of a large and cheerful family circle, condemned to solitary confinement (for such I must call his kind of bachelor life in lodgings), suffering from acute neuralgia, so that even a look at a paper, or the writing of a note, distracted his head, and wearied his aching eyeballs. What could he do? There were his papers lying unread before him, his letters unanswered; in fact, all the small duties of his life of necessity neglected. "Eureka!" he exclaimed; "what is there to hinder me from getting another hand to do the work that I am unable to perform?" And so he advertised forthwith for a lady-reader and amanuensis.

The reader will ask, as I did, why he preferred to commit this office to a lady. His reply when I put the question to him was—"There are many ladies, and but few gentlemen, who possess the necessary knowledge of modern languages. Again, most of the men who would accept such a situation are persons who have failed in other careers from incapacity or misconduct. And, lastly, a man of ability and good character would expect to be paid for his services two or three times as much as would content a lady." My friend thought he was taking a well-considered step; but by this hasty act he brought upon himself a world of trouble.

Seven hundred and eighty answers were the result of his experiment. He did not know how many gentlewomen are unemployed and yet eager for employment. Letters poured in from all parts of the United Kingdom. Many bore elegantly devised ciphers, indicating both the position and taste of the writers. Most of the letters furnished real names and addresses, whilst others were simply signed with initials, and dated from post offices. Some of the applicants asked permission to send their cartes-de-visite. Who knows what my friend may have lost by not taking advantage of their generous offers?

Out of the seven hundred and eighty letters at least two hundred were well written, both as to penmanship and composition; some laconic, others verbose, a few remarkably well expressed.

The greater part of the applicants were governesses, who would, no doubt, be only too thankful to be released from a life which in some cases exposes them to a vulgar persecution almost unendurable. The position and ability of the applicants were various. Among the candidates were authoresses, and ladies employed in assisting authors; students and scholars of ladies' colleges, one of them with eight diplomas; professional elocutionists; widows, wives, and daughters of clergymen, of physicians, of surgeons, of officers in the army and navy, of men of letters, and of merchants.

Most of the applicants represented themselves as being in straitened circumstances. Many spoke of reverses in business which had fallen on the breadwinner of the family; and two had been reduced to poverty by Chancery suits. Wives expressed in touching language their anxiety to give help to sick husbands; and widows eagerly sought employment, in their desire to educate and keep a home for their fatherless children. Some were influenced by a humane desire to alleviate the sufferings of the sick; whilst a few married ladies sought work because they themselves were sick of having nothing better to do than reading novels. These would have looked with contempt upon the old-world idea of Milton, that—

"Nothing lovelier can be found
In woman, than to study household good,
And good works in her husband to promote."

Some seemed actually to jump at the idea of reading aloud, it having always been their favourite pastime. They had learned to enjoy the pleasure when reading for relations incapacitated by illness, or suffering under the privation of blindness. One candidate had travelled half over the world, and promised to amuse the invalid with tales of foreign countries. Another claimed to possess the power of magnetism. I need hardly tell you her letter was as soon as read consigned to the flames. Like many others, she asked for an interview, and my friend was for many days haunted with the idea that this magnetic lady would appear, and perhaps force him contrary to his own inclinations to engage her. Another, thinking perhaps of the story of Saul, particularly put forward her skill in harp-playing. The ages of the candidates varied from sixteen to seventy.

The majority, feeling doubtless a diffidence in eulogising themselves by enumerating their own qualifications, begged for interviews, evidently

thinking it would be a case of *Veni, vidi, vici*. To what this might have led it is hard to conjecture, for matters were bad enough as they were. My friend being only a lodger, and so absolutely dependent upon the will and pleasure of his landlady, was in constant dread of hearing her say she must give him notice to quit.

For about a fortnight poor Mary Jane was run off her legs answering the door to his visitors—visitors who would not be satisfied with the usual “not at home,” but who insisted on asking a string of questions, such as “What is the gentleman’s name?” “Is he young or old?” “Married?” “Single?” or “Widowed?” “And is he a great invalid?” An affirmative answer to this last question was sometimes followed by “Oh dear, how sad! and you don’t think he would like to see me? Well, there’s my card, and I’ll call again if I don’t hear from the gentleman.” All this, he told me, he was able to hear distinctly from his ground-floor rooms. Sometimes Mary Jane appeared to close the door with emphasis, and my friend prepared to receive her remonstrances, or at least endure her reproachful looks. But she and her mistress bore their trials with an exemplary patience; the door-bell had rest, and the postman ceased to haunt the house.

Presuming that my friend’s experience may be taken as a fair sample of that of many others—and we may safely do this when we remember how many advertisements we meet with of a character similar to his—we cannot think without pain of the vast number of women, many of them enjoying the advantage of a fair, and some of a really good education, who are able and willing to work, who have urgent need of the means which would be derived from some sort of employment, and who yet are absolutely and entirely helpless; left to the mercy of a world which shows them, goodness knows, little enough mercy; and even when successful in obtaining employment, confined to one or two occupations in which they render the most valuable services to the young and the old, under circumstances which are too often felt to be humiliating and painful.

I leave it to those who are better able than I am to discuss the causes of the difficulty experienced by women in obtaining work, and to suggest the means whereby it may be alleviated or removed. But I will venture to notice one or two reasons for the existence of so large a body of women seeking employment and finding none. The first that suggests itself is the improvidence which is one of the curses of this age and country, above all other ages and countries; an evil thing born of selfishness and vanity, fit offspring of such parents, leading the head of a family to ape the habits of those in better circumstances than himself. From his dwelling down to the very clothes with which he covers himself, all his surroundings are shams

made not for use, but to counterfeit what they are not? And all this to what end? Because he wishes to appear better? Wiser? More honourable? None of these; because he wishes to appear richer than his neighbours! With this unworthy aim he squanders the means which should form a provision for his wife and children. At his death he leaves a helpless mother to work for the still more helpless little ones. And if the mother cannot work, or cannot find employment, then we know the story well enough. We see it every day. One by one her possessions disappear. At last, when everything has been disposed of, and the small voices are every day growing feebler, and the pale faces more wan; for lack of what, little as it is, she has not to give them, the sad story ends with starvation or the poor-house.

And thus a woman accustomed to every comfort, perhaps to every luxury, is compelled to battle for very bread; all the woman-life crushed out by the rude elbowing of the world. Dismal to think of when a man must go through it; sickening when it is the fate of a woman.

The faulty education which women almost universally receive is another fertile source of the distress under which so many labour; and knowing this we cannot wonder that the occupation of teaching children is overstocked in the extraordinary way which is actually the case; especially when it is generally supposed that to qualify oneself for such duties no special talent or instruction is needed. And perhaps instruction is not the thing most required. For what we want our little ones to learn of such a teacher is not their A B C, not their notes, so much as to be good and true, gentle and pure.

Now the question is how can we reduce the number of gentlewomen who must work, and help the remainder to find work? The selfish improvidence which throws so many of our women upon their own resources ought to be easily overcome. Nine-tenths, I suppose, of the inhabitants of this country live up to the full extent of their income, instead of laying by provision for those who are left helpless at their death. I therefore draw this conclusion, that a very small amount of self-denial on the part of those who have women dependent on them, would suffice to greatly reduce the number of women obliged to work for their living, and not only save their widows and daughters from a painful struggle for existence, but allow to those who must necessarily maintain themselves by their labour a far better chance of success. Men seem to forget there is such a thing as life insurance, which enables them, by foregoing the use of a definite portion of their income, to secure a livelihood to the surviving members of their families. To such as say that “Heaven never sends mouths, but it sends bread to feed them,” I would reply that

"Heaven helps those who help themselves." Angels will not keep continual watch over one family more than over another, because the head of it is improvident. And if the maxim above quoted holds good in a literal sense, how are we to account for the number of children daily refused admission to our hospitals, refuges, and such establishments?

To suggest new means of finding employment for those women who must work is far from easy. Many plans have been devised, but most of those that have as yet been brought forward are open to grave objections.

From inability to do more, I shall confine myself to pointing out one or two conditions which any such employment ought to fulfil. To be of real use, it should not be of such a nature as to render it necessary that the work should be carried on away from home, nor such as to engross the time of the

worker so as to interfere with the discharge of domestic duties.

And further, whatever women do, it should be something which would not bring them into close contact and competition with men. They cannot feel as men do, nor men as they; they cannot do as men do, nor men as they. Much has been said about *throwing open* to women occupations in which men exclusively have hitherto been employed; but it probably does not occur to those who clamour for this measure, that in most cases there are more men to do the work than there is work to do, so that every woman who found employment in such a case would displace a man, and women would be working while men would be idle. And after all, they would find that they were not fit for men's work. You cannot cut down an oak with a pair of embroidery scissors, or sink a well with a bodkin.

HESTER MORLEY'S PROMISE.

BY HESBA STRETTON,

AUTHOR OF "THE DOCTOR'S DILEMMA," ETC. ETC.

CHAPTER THE THIRTY-FIRST.

THE TWO HESTERS.

"It's a good kind nurse as Mr. Bramwell has sent," said the servant "she's going to read the Bible and pray for you, my poor dear. She'll stay all morning with you, while I'm busy; and you must ask her for anything you want."

"I don't want anything," answered the plaintive voice of the child; and Hester raised her head to look into her white face. There was a profound serenity and patience in it; a look almost of satisfaction. She smiled faintly at Hester, and stretched out her thin fingers to touch her forehead.

"You can go away now, please," she said to the servant; "and then she will begin to read and talk to me."

Hester listened to the servant's retreating steps, and then she lay down beside the child, and took her fondly and gently into her arms.

"I am come instead of your mother," she said, with difficulty restraining her tears; "you may talk to me as if I were your mother."

"Do you know my mother?" she asked.

"Oh, very well indeed, my darling," answered Hester, falling by instinct into the caressing tone and manner of a tender-hearted woman towards a child, though she had had nothing to do with any child before. "Why, she lives with me down at Little Aston; and perhaps some day you may come too, and be my little sister. It will all be as God pleases, and He knows best."

"Yes," said the child, smiling; "of course He knows best. But sometimes I think if He'd only let me and my mother live together! I've lived at school all my life, and I've only seen her for a day or two, now and then. Do you know why we could not live together?"

"She was very poor," said Hester, "and she had to work very hard for herself and you."

"And my father must have been very poor, too," continued the feeble voice. "I don't think anybody else in the school was ever so poor, for they all have holidays, and I never have. The girls used to tell me such things they'd done, when they came back to school. Did you have holidays?"

"I never went to school," answered Hester.

"Never went to school!" she repeated, raising her feeble head a little to look into Hester's face. "How happy you must have been! But I've been at school all my life; and now I think God will let me go to have my holidays with the other children who are dead. What do you cry for? I don't know what to call you. What is your name?"

"Hester," she replied, pressing her lips upon the little hand. The child's blue eyes glistened, and her mouth quivered with surprise and delight.

"Why, that is my name!" she cried; "you never can be the good Hester, the dear, beautiful Hester I'm called after! Oh! are you that Hester? My mother used to cry ever so when she talked about her. Are you the very same Hester?"

"Yes, my darling little Hester," she sobbed ; " I was her little girl once."

"Then we are both Hesters !" said the child with a playful smile. "How droll that is ! Are we alike in anything else ? How old are you ?"

"I am ten years older than you," she answered.

"And perhaps you will live to be very old, and

I was born. If he had been alive he would have worked and worked and worked to get money, that we might not be so very poor, and for me to have some holidays. Did you know my father ?"

"Dear child, yes !" she murmured sadly.

"Oh ! tell me about him. Tell me what he was like. My mother always cried if I spoke about him



"FELT HER HAND SUDDENLY SEIZED."

I shall die soon," said the child ; "no, we are not alike in anything else. Are we alike ?"

"Yes, I used to be a very lonely little girl like you," said Hester pitifully ; "nobody ever used to nurse me or to play with me like other children. My mother was dead."

"Had you a live father ?" asked little Hester.

"Yes," she answered.

"Then we are not alike in that," went on the child ; "I never had a father. He died before ever

ever. I dream of him so often—every night now, I think. Do you think he will know me in heaven ?"

"Your Father in heaven will know you," answered Hester.

"Yes, God !" said little Hester, with a simple confidence ; "I shall see Him and know Him. But shall I see my father who was my father here ?"

"My darling," she replied, "it will be all as God chooses for us."

She nestled down contentedly for some time in

Hester's arms ; not sleeping, for her eyes were wide open. But after awhile she stirred again, and took off her white cap, letting her hair loose about her face. It was soft brown hair, cut short, but curling naturally in small shining rings.

"You shall cut some off," she said ; "I want to give them away. There are scissors on the table."

She watched the curls drop off one by one upon the quilt, and twisted them round her fingers.

"Such a funny thing !" she said, looking up with shining eyes. "I was just thinking how my father would like one of them. There's one for my mother, and one for Mr. Bramwell, and one for you ; only three little curls to give away ! Some of the girls have uncles and aunts and grandfathers, as well as their own father and mother, and brothers and sisters. How I should have liked to have them all ; and how I would have loved them ! Are you any relation to me, Hester ?"

"Not exactly, my darling," she said.

"Did you love my father when you knew him ?"

"When I was as old as you, I loved him very much," answered Hester, with a faltering voice ; "he used to read to me while I sat on his knee."

"But he never nursed me on his knee !" cried the child, with a sudden passion of tears. "He never saw me, and we never knew one another."

She wept bitterly for some time, leaning against Hester, who soothed her with fond words and caresses, until she grew calm again, and lay down upon the pillow exhausted, with her face as white as the cover upon which it rested.

"Tell me what he was like, while I lie quiet," she whispered, almost inaudibly.

"He was tall and very handsome," said Hester.

"Very handsome," repeated his little daughter, with lips that could scarcely speak.

"And he had a very pleasant voice."

"A very pleasant voice," echoed the child.

"Oh, my darling !" cried Hester, "I cannot tell you any more. Be quiet now. You will hurt yourself by talking."

"The doctor told me I wasn't to talk at all," she said ; "but I can't help talking to you. I like to hear your voice speaking. You shall read to me, if you please."

Hester read to her in soft low tones for some time, until she fell asleep, holding her hand fast. By-and-by there came in the lady of the house, a tall, gaunt, weary-looking woman, with all the airs and affectations of a mistress of a cheap boarding-school. She acknowledged Hester's presence by a stiff curtesy, and stood at the foot of the bed regarding the child with an air of cold anxiety.

"What do you think of her ?" she asked.

"I think she will never get well," whispered Hester, with tears in her eyes.

"Dear, dear ! But that is very trying," she replied, "especially in a school. The parents might

think it was measles or small-pox. She must be taken away at once."

"I will speak to Mr. Bramwell about it," said Hester. "To-night I shall go to his chapel, and then I shall see him. She shall be removed to-morrow, if possible."

"Is there no immediate danger ?" she asked.

"I should think not," answered Hester ; "but the doctor will tell you when he comes."

When he came, the doctor, a young medical assistant to an older man, gave it as his opinion that the child might rally and live through the summer, but would certainly "be cut off" at the approach of winter. Hester stayed beside her all day, and only in the evening left her in order to go to Carl's chapel, which was about two miles away. As she stooped over to kiss her, the little Hester put her arm feebly round her neck, and looked up beseechingly into her eyes.

"You will not be away long ?" she murmured ; "you are sure to come back ?"

"I am sure to come back very soon," she said ; "and perhaps I shall bring Mr. Bramwell back with me. You are fond of him ?"

"Oh, very fond," whispered the child.

CHAPTER THE THIRTY-SECOND.

THEN AND NOW.

ALL the day, after Hester's departure, John Morley suffered under an access of morbid and despairing thoughts. The stillness of his home was more profound than ever, now that he had lost the soft footstep of his daughter moving about his room, and her low caressing voice speaking to him from time to time. Lawson entered the room once, after knocking loudly at the door and receiving no answer. He found his master lying half across his desk, so absorbed in reverie as to be unconscious of his presence, until he touched him on the shoulder. Then he lifted up his face, greyer and more haggard than ever, with eyes burning more deeply in their sockets, while his hand trembled as if with palsy. It was the last interruption but one which broke in upon his melancholy memories.

This other interruption was the entrance of the young maid-servant, who, with a tearful face, came to tell her master that a brother of hers was coming home to pay his last visit there, before emigrating to America. If he could only spare her till Monday evening, Lawson's mother had promised to look after the house and wait upon him. John Morley said "Go," almost impatiently. It signified nothing to him who discharged the small services he required.

Madame Lawson had promised Hester to go about nine o'clock, or a little later, after her son's comfort had been provided for, and stay all night and the next day in John Morley's house. The girl wanted to leave at four ; and it seemed but a small thing to her to ask the poor woman her

mistress gave a shelter to, to fill up the space between her departure and the arrival of Madame Lawson. She asked Rose boldly ; and she seized the chance with the passionate eagerness of one who has long waited for the moment when they can do something, anything, for their beloved. She would have waited upon John Morley—upon this white-headed, poverty-stricken, deserted husband, on bended knees, with deep abasement and trembling devotion. But all her duties would be to prepare his tea and summon him to it, keeping herself unseen.

She stole up-stairs with a noiseless step into his chamber, and arranged the bed again, which had been left roughly and hastily made by the servant, making it as soft and full of comfort as tender hands could make it. Then she looked out the clothes he would need for the Sunday, lingering over her work with a frightened ecstasy.

When the hour for tea came, she set the tray and his chair near the fire, in a room adjoining his sitting-room, and put his slippers on the hearth. Would he need anything she had not placed upon the table, and ring for her, so giving her some chance of hearing his voice and looking furtively into his face? Whether she dreaded or hoped for this most, she could not tell, while she stood at the kitchen door, with her hands pressed against her heart, as she listened to his movements about the other room. But he did not ring ; and, after a brief meal-time, she heard him go back to his own sitting-room. He remained there till seven o'clock, when he went out to attend meeting at the chapel.

She was alone in her own house now, quite alone. She could venture into John Morley's desolate parlour, which she had seen so often from without. How well she remembered the old days passed in it ! Here was the carpet she had chosen herself, faded and threadbare, with one long, narrow, bare strip, which his feet had worn in his restless paces to and fro. The scarlet baize she had nailed with brass nails along the edge of the bookshelves, in order to brighten up the dingy rows of books, was a deep dull red now, and the nails no longer glistened in the fire-light. She began to wonder how the room overhead would look—her room, which she had locked up herself, and the key of which was still safe in her keeping. She knew herself to be absolutely alone, with no fear of interruption for another hour to come. Lingering for a few minutes in a tremor of nervous hesitation, she could not succeed in shaking off the feverish desire to see it once again, during this absence of Hester, which made it possible to do so. She flew back to her refuge, and sought the key at the bottom of the box which held her scanty possessions. It had accompanied her in all her wanderings—this key which she had turned upon the Paradise she despised, and could never more re-enter. She hastened with it—for her time was

not long—up the staircase again, which she had so often trodden with a light step and lighter heart ; past Hester's little room, so severe, so simple, so bare of all the common luxuries of girlhood ; past her husband's chamber. Beyond stood the door which no hand had opened since she herself had closed it. The key was not rusty, but the lock was, and it grated harshly, and the hinges creaked as she pushed open the door. Then she stood inside.

Just as she had left it ! She had remembered to bring a candle with her, though it was still daylight in the other rooms, and its faint light was insufficient to make manifest all the ravages of time. There were the books she had been reading after her fitful fashion, still scattered on the table, with a man's glove lying among them. She recollected it in an instant ; it was one of Robert Waldron's. There was her fanciful little couch of blue damask drawn up to the fireside, and the chair beside it where he had been sitting, and Hester's low hassock between her seat and his. The piano was still open, and a yellow page of music—no doubt some song she had been singing to him—was resting upon the stand. A grey dust and tarnish had fallen upon all ; but she scarcely saw it. It seemed to her as if it could only have been yesterday—last night—when she locked it up, and she had been passing through some horrible dream. This sharp martyrdom of repentance was no more than a trick of her forewarning conscience. The utter stillness and solitariness of the house was but an accident of the passing hour. Hester must be asleep in her little bed, and her husband would come in soon from chapel. When she saw Robert again, she would bid him come near her no more.

Rose stood in the middle of the room, gazing vacantly about her. It seemed as if after a mighty tempest, after a strong flood of great troubles and sins, which had tossed her feeble soul from billow to billow, she had been brought suddenly home again to the haven where she could cast anchor in still smooth water. She had been very happy to-day. She felt like a child whose face is hidden in the close embrace of its mother, and who sees no longer the terrors which have driven it to that refuge. She was vaguely, childishly happy again for a moment. Everything evil was drawing near to an end. The night was almost past, and the day was at hand. Even, here, the place which should have upbraided her most loudly, she saw sadness, indeed, but not hopelessness. Her sins, which were many, had been pardoned.

She crossed the room slowly to the piano, and stooped down to look at the music-sheet on it. It was no song, but a chant—"I will arise and go to my Father." She remembered now that it was to her husband, not to Robert Waldron, she had sung it ; and he had stood beside her, his hand resting upon her shoulder, and his voice, a low, weak, yet

sweet voice, joining with hers. Was it not a token for good, finding this sacred chant still open? Then she had known nothing about going to the Father. Now she had arisen, with all her sins and unfaithfulness, and gone to Him, and he had seen her afar off, and had received her gladly. Would it not be the same with her husband? She sat down and ran her fingers absently along the discoloured keys. The jarring, jingling tones, which had lost all harmony, brought her back sharply to the full reality of her position. She could dream no more. The small mirror, which she had had set over the piano, reflected from its dulled surface a faded, stricken, withered face, instead of the bright, laughing features of the young proud mistress of a new home. She was Rose Morley, the guilty wife of a dishonoured husband.

CHAPTER THE THIRTY-THIRD.

A TERRIBLE NIGHT.

JOHN MORLEY went up to the chapel, and after waiting there some time, and finding no other member of the small church was coming, he went back directly to his house. All day he had been the prey of vehement agitation, and the approaching return of night did not tend to allay it. He let himself into his lonely dwelling, and stood upon the threshold for a minute with the door half open in his hand, listening for some sound to break the stillness of his home. A craven fear of being quite alone was at work within him for the first time in his life; his flesh crept and his nerves tingled. But he had no resource, there was no means of escaping from this new and panic dread. He closed the door and went on, stopping to change his boots for the slippers he found put ready for him. He entered his own parlour and lit his lamp; but this attack upon his nervous system continued to gather strength. His hands trembled until he could not turn over the leaves of his book. A vague, indescribable impression was produced upon his mind by something in the aspect of his room, that his lost wife had been there a few minutes ago—had but just quitted it. He fancied more keenly than ever that he could almost see her and hear her. An agony of mingled despair and tenderness shook his soul to the centre. It might have been but a day or two since Rose had forsaken him; it might have been the very night when he had aroused his little girl from her sleep, telling her it was better to die than to live. There was something unutterably mournful in this strong, unwitnessed anguish, which mastered John Morley, and brought the past before him a hundred-fold more vivid than the present.

Upon this paroxysm of his soul, which just now was bearing him rapidly to the verge of insanity, there fell suddenly the shrill, false jangle of the piano in the room overhead. He lifted himself up, and hearkened with a ghastly face. The dis-

cord ran through his fevered brain once, and then ceased; the house was plunged again into the dreariness of an unbroken silence.

He held his breath and listened for some minutes, his heart failing him for fear of he knew not what. He believed that Carl had summoned Hester to the death-bed of Rose. Could it be, could it possibly be, that in the supreme hour and article of death she was having permission to return once more, in ghostly presence, to her abandoned home? His wrath against her, and his tenderness for her, rose again to their highest pitch. If her apparition only stood before him, the mere spectral shade of his guilty wife, he would hurl against it all the pent-up anger of these many years, or lavish upon it the treasure of his unexhausted love. Was there any other sound to be heard, or was it his fancy that now a stealthy step, scarcely louder than the passing of a breath of wind through the house, was creeping across the floor overhead? The moisture stood in large drops upon his forehead, and his face grew set and pallid as the face of a corpse. He tried to speak aloud, if only to dispel the awful stillness about him, but his throat was dry and his tongue parched. At length there came to his ears a shrill cry and a smothered sob—a strange, terrible, inexplicable sound, which made him deaf for a minute or two to every other noise. When that ringing in his brain was over, and his dimmed sight grew clear again, he laid a stern hold upon his fleeting courage, and with slow steps ascended to the floor above.

His own chamber was the first upon the landing, and he had scarcely ever been beyond it. He passed Hester's open door and glanced round the room, but there was no sound or sight of horror there. Farther on, a fringe of light glimmered in the dusk from under the door of the locked-up drawing-room. His footsteps faltered and were arrested for an instant. A light there! What then could there be within that room? His failing and reluctant feet carried him to the very door-side. The catch of the lock had slipped, and the feeblest effort of his hand would suffice to push the door open; but he could not move. Superstition swooped down upon him with all the might of its most ghastly terrors, and he had no strength to contend with it. At last he lashed himself up into a fury, a storm of ruthless anger against Rose. If he and she were both dead, and had met at length in the mysterious land of spirits, he would even there denounce her for the woes she had made him suffer.

He pushed the door with his hand, and looked in. The one candle burning upon the table left the corners of the room in obscurity, but there fell enough light upon the piano to discover to him the form of some woman, slight and slender like her, with a pale grey shawl wrapped about her, leaning

forward, or rather lying against the piano before which she sat. The attitude was utterly helpless and inanimate, as if she had fallen forward fainting. Her long fair hair had dropped down about her shoulders. He held himself back, quivering with passion, and gazing at her with steadfast and flaming eyes. It was indeed Rose, whether in the body or out of the body, he could not tell; it was his wife, whom he had loved so fondly, and whom he had loved more, he knew it now, since she left him, than while she was still with him.

He raised his hand to his burning head, and pressed it across his eyes, but the apparition remained there in its attitude of motionless despair. Once he thought it moved, but it was only the flicker of the candle in the draught from the open door which set the shadows about her fluttering. He heard in the distant part of the house, where the workrooms were, the shutting of some door, and the turning of a lock, and he knew it was Lawson going away from his work. He was late to-night, he thought; turning the words over and over again in his mind, as if glad to get some common every-day idea into his brain. The candle was burning low, and would not last many minutes longer. In a short time he would be alone in the darkness with this awful and speechless form. He must needs speak; he must enter; he must perhaps touch this strange shadow. With a sudden shrill cry of a man's most terrible anguish, which awoke hollow echoes through the empty house, John Morley cast himself into the gloomy room before him.

Ten minutes later he came out again, with a face from whose veins all the blood seemed to have gone, but with a stain of deep crimson upon the palms of his hands, at which he looked again and again with eyes of horror. He went hesitatingly down-stairs into his own parlour, and opened his desk, and a drawer within it where he kept his money. He took out a roll of notes, and spread them before him with an air of bewilderment, resting his forehead upon his hand, which stained his white hair with clammy clots of blood. He sat there a few minutes only, but he fancied these were hours; and the soft pure grey of the evening sky, with a few rosy clouds floating over it, he took for the dawn of the morning. He roused himself, shuddering, and lifting his bloodshot and heavy eyes to the dying light in the heavens, he muttered aloud in the silent room, "I must flee to Hester."

He went up-stairs to put together a few clothes in a portmanteau, with a confused notion of preparing for a journey. Then he caught sight of his blood-stained hair in the glass, and shivered and moaned like a frightened child. He washed it, and his hands again and again, as if he could see the stain long after it had been washed away. After this he took up his portmanteau, and left the house un-

locked and empty; strode quickly up the street, past the chapel, under the trees, and along the lanes which had invited him in vain only yesterday. He walked all night swiftly, with perplexed and wandering thoughts; and when the dawn came, he inquired of the first person he met where the nearest station was, and there he took the earliest train for London.

CHAPTER THE THIRTY-FOURTH.

BESIDE HIMSELF.

A LITTLE after six o'clock on Sunday evening, Hester entered the porch of Carl's chapel. Already the fashionably dressed congregation were beginning to arrive, and she heard his praises spoken as she waited to be put into a seat. She was at last conducted to an obscure place in one of the galleries, where, though she could see the pulpit well, it was not probable that Carl could recognise her face amongst the number surrounding him. Hester was content, however; she would hear him again, and when the service was over she would go to speak to him in the vestry about the little Hester.

Carl appeared at the appointed minute, and she trembled nervously as he glanced around the crowded chapel. Then followed an hour of intense happiness—that of a woman whose most devout worship is led by the being she loves the most. Hester's whole soul was in that brief fleeting season of worship: an interval so short, that when the mass of people rose to go away she looked about her in amazement. Carl seemed to have caught her eye then, for he stood a moment before leaving the pulpit, gazing towards her. It was some time before she could get down the crowded staircase, and when she did so the chapel-keeper told her the best way to get to the minister's vestry was to go round on the outside of the building. She passed on with the throng, but just as she was about to turn the corner of the chapel she felt her hand suddenly seized, and herself drawn rapidly down towards the street. It was her father, who had taken hold of her, and was hurrying her towards a cab which was waiting at a little distance. But what could bring her father there? What terrible calamity could have driven him so far adrift from his fixed habits? Had Rose persisted in discovering herself to him? and had some catastrophe been the result? He did not speak to her, and when she spoke he appeared deaf to her voice. He sank down into a corner of the cab, covering his face with his hands. Once he looked up, and there was a gleam of light, not quite sane, in his sunken eyes.

"What is the matter, father?" she ventured to ask.

"Not yet!" he cried, shrinking back again; "not yet, Hester! I am not quite ready yet."

They drove rapidly to some station; and he sent

her on to the platform while he bought the tickets. A train was on the point of starting, and he hurried her into a carriage. It never occurred to her to suppose that they were going anywhere but back to Little Aston; and, by the speed at which they travelled, she judged that they would be soon half-way there. This was as they passed somewhat slowly through a station (for they stopped at none), and she saw by the clock there that it was after eleven. She wondered how little Hester would bear the disappointment of not seeing her again; and the tears she could not keep back, and which she would not wipe away lest her father should see them, stole down her cheeks.

Presently the train slackened speed, and in a few minutes came to a standstill. There was no station near, and it was as dark as it ever is during the early nights of June.

"What can be the matter?" she exclaimed to herself involuntarily. Their fellow-passengers were collecting together their cloaks and parcels, and preparing to leave the carriage. The gentleman who was next to her caught her half-audible exclamation.

"There is nothing the matter," he answered pleasantly; "the train runs alongside the vessels, and we have nothing to do but embark immediately. Your luggage will be quite safe."

"This young lady is my daughter," said John Morley hurriedly, "and I will take care of her."

Hester looked out and saw an utterly inexplicable and unfamiliar scene. There lay just before her the black outlines of a steamer, and beyond them a dark tossing plain, with a faint suggestion of light upon it, as if it had not yet quite lost the lustre of the sunset. A confusion of strange cries and voices surrounded her, amidst which she heard her father whisper, "For God's sake be silent, and follow me."

Almost before she could recover from her amazement, she found herself on the deck of one of the steamers, which soon began to move slowly away from the pier.

The other passengers had hurried down into the cabin to secure berths for the night; and the deck was deserted by all except the captain and his crew, who were busy in getting safely out of port.

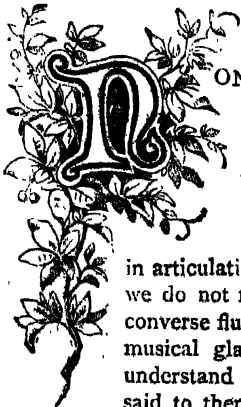
John Morley led his daughter to a seat removed from every danger of being overheard, and sat down close beside her, shivering with excitement as much as from the chilly air of the sea.

"Hester," he whispered in a hollow and tremulous voice, "I am fleeing to a city of refuge."

END OF CHAPTER THE THIRTY-FOURTH

SIGHT *VERSUS* SOUND.

IN TWO PARTS—PART THE SECOND.



ONE of the pupils here have been under instruction more than two years, the school itself having only been opened in July of last year; and we must not therefore expect to find anything like perfection either in articulation or lip-reading. But though we do not find the children prepared to converse fluently on Shakespeare and the musical glasses as yet, they appear to understand nearly everything which is said to them, either by their teachers or visitors, if they are deliberately addressed. For instance, Mr. Van Praagh desired one of the boys, who has been under tuition only a year and a half, and who is quite deaf, to fetch him a glass of water. He immediately brought what was asked for, and then placed the glass on the mantel-shelf without any hesitation, on being told to do so. The rapidity of progress depends, of course, very much upon the capability of the child, both with regard to hearing and general intelligence. Some are totally deaf, whilst others are just capable of

perceiving sound, although not sufficiently so to understand what is said, or to learn to speak in the ordinary way. Still, even a very slight degree of sensitiveness is an assistance to the teacher, especially in his efforts to make the pupil speak smoothly and harmoniously. But, apart from this, there are the same differences of mental activity in deaf mutes as in other children, some being more than ordinarily quick, whilst others are quite the reverse. Seven or eight years is not considered too long a period for tuition in ordinary cases, and this is the time required, reckoning from the age of seven years, in order to fairly qualify a deaf mute to enter upon the practical business of life.

During these years the child is not only specially trained in speaking, etc., but is taught arithmetic, geography, history, drawing, composition, and, in the case of girls, needlework. Above all, thinking is cultivated, nothing being taught simply by rote. Thus, as I enter the schoolroom, one class has just had a preliminary lesson in geography, by drawing on the blackboard a plan of the schoolroom, with the various articles of furniture in their proper places; and they are following this up by

drawing on their slates similar plans of their own rooms at home. I look at one boy's—a very creditable performance—and, seeing a small bed by the side of a large one, ask if it is his own. He shakes his head, and says, "Baby's," quite distinctly. In this way they are led on to the geography of the neighbourhood, then of the whole of London, then England, Europe, and finally of the world. They are not taught that Paris is the capital of France without knowing what either Paris or France means.

Let us now observe how the foundation of speech is laid; and here indeed, if ever, is the truth of the French proverb as to the importance of the *first step* manifested. Of course, the first thing is to get the child to make sounds consciously at all; but this is not practically found a serious difficulty, as all deaf children are in the habit of uttering sounds of a semi-articulate nature, and they soon learn, when their attention is directed to the matter, to recognise the peculiar sensation attendant on articulation, and even, it is said, to distinguish whether a person addressing them is really speaking or only moving his lips. I can confirm this to some extent, for I noticed two of the children whispering (one might almost call it) to each other across the table—that is to say, communicating with their lips, but silently. If, as sometimes happens, the pupil does not speak loudly enough, the teacher directs his attention to the forcible manner in which he himself speaks, at the same time pressing on the walls of the child's chest with his hand, so as to increase the power of the voice. If the contrary fault is observed, too loud and harsh a sound being produced, the teacher grasps the child's hand, and, lowering it as he lowers his own voice, encourages him to imitate him. Accent, or the quantity of syllables, is taught in the same way at a somewhat later stage.

The simple vowel sounds, *ah*, *oo*, *o*, and *e*, are first taught, and when these are readily imitated from the lips of the teacher, the easier consonants follow.

Infants learn to say *pa*, *ma*, *ta*, first, and in like manner the deaf mute finds it easier to pronounce *p*, *b*, *d*, *f*, or *m*, than *l*, *r*, *g*, *k*, or *y*. Here is a little boy five years old, who has only been at school a fortnight, who can already say *papa* very fairly, and also the simple vowels. Afterwards come the compound vowels, *i*, *oi*, *ou*, which are more difficult; but in each case the pupil is made to imitate, as closely as possible, the movements of the lips, tongue, and larynx of the teacher, who also assists him by placing the organs in proper position, closing or dilating the nostrils, etc., as occasion may require.

P is produced by puffing out the cheeks fully with the lips quite closed and then suddenly opening them; *f*, by pressing the upper teeth upon

the lower lip; *t*, by placing the tip of the tongue against the upper teeth and suddenly withdrawing it.

It is not necessary to give in detail, or rather attempt, a description of the various movements necessary to the production of the English alphabet; but if the reader will amuse himself by trying to do so, especially to discover the particular movement which determines the difference between *t* and *d*, *f* and *v*, *s* and *z*, *p* and *b*, *ch* and *j*, he will, I think, be duly impressed with the fact that in these earlier stages of instruction considerable anatomical skill, practical experience, and above all immense patience, are eminently requisite for a successful result.

It thus happens that, contrary to the usual practice, the director, or head master, devotes his attention chiefly to the junior scholars, since the farther they advance, the less do they need his special assistance.

Long before the whole alphabet is mastered, its more elementary sounds are combined to form simple words of one syllable, commencing with such as begin or end only with a consonant, then proceeding to those which both begin and end with a consonant, and then advancing to monosyllables beginning, ending, or both, with double or treble consonants, such as *straw*, *horse*, etc. Afterwards come polysyllables and sentences. Each of these steps, though apparently trifling, in reality involves a considerable effort, and great care is required to insure correct pronunciation; in particular to prevent the introduction of vowel sounds between two or more consonants coming together, and after a final one.

Having thus briefly traced the order in which articulation is acquired, we must now go back and see how, contemporaneously with this process, a meaning is attached to every sound; for, without this, the most accurate speech would be a mere parrot-like performance, totally useless for any practical purpose.

As soon as a word is properly pronounced, the teacher writes it on the blackboard, and teaches the child to do the same, at the same time showing him the object represented, or a picture of it. Thus, having learned to speak it from watching his teacher's lips, he associates in his mind, first, the word uttered either by another or by himself; secondly, the word written; and, thirdly, the object represented.

This association is never allowed to fade from the mind, the question, "What is it?" being constantly interposed in the course of the speaking lesson, when the child indicates by some appropriate gesture his understanding of the word. *Natural* signs are constantly used in this way (such as encircling one finger with another to describe a ring, placing the two hands together to indicate a

muff, and so on) to rivet the connection between words and ideas, though *arbitrary* signs, such as the finger alphabet, are rigidly excluded. Thus, even the ordinary names of the letters are not taught, simply because they would be useless; it would only confuse the pupil to teach him *see, ay, tee—cat*; and therefore spelling is conducted strictly on the phonetic principle. Special letters, however, such as those employed by Mr. Pitman, are avoided, their places being supplied by accents, etc., which may be discontinued when no longer required.

For instance, silent letters, such as *b* in *doubt*, *gh* in *right*, have a special mark placed over them when the word is first written, but the pupil soon learns to dispense with it, not only in the same word, but in similar combinations.

It will be seen that no attempt is made to save time and trouble at the outset by teaching the deaf mute anything which, though useful to him when surrounded by those in the secret, would not fit him for ordinary life. Thus, for instance, a great deal might be said in favour of teaching these poor children a simple system of shorthand, by means of which they could communicate with each other in writing as quickly and certainly, perhaps more so, than by speech; but stenography being an art not generally known, they would be still left helpless when they came in contact with the outer world.

One or two questions may naturally suggest themselves—as, for instance, how a deaf person can distinguish sounds which are formed wholly or partially in the throat; and whether the pupils do not, after leaving the school, lose their power of speech, not having a teacher to correct their mistakes, and keep them, as it were, up to the mark.

With regard to the first point, no doubt there would be a difficulty in distinguishing certain words from each other, such as *bad* and *pad*, *den* and *ten*, if they stood alone, but in ordinary conversation the sense supplies the proper word, in the same way as it does to an ordinary person when listening to an indistinct speaker, or deciphering a badly-written MS. As to the latter point, if the pupils left school before attaining proficiency, and when they could neither understand ordinary speech nor make themselves easily understood, there would doubtless be the danger suggested; but before the eight years' course is finished, the connection is as indissolubly fixed between thoughts and words—spoken as well as written—in the case of deaf mutes as of ordinary persons; and this result is attained all the more readily from their constantly mixing in daily intercourse with the world at large.

Of course, one cannot speak positively on this point as yet from experience in England, but Mr. Van Praagh assures me it is the case in Holland, and it was proved to be so at the two meetings referred to at the beginning of this paper, by the readiness with which Mr. Polano (a Dutch gentleman, totally deaf from his birth) conversed with several strangers, even in a foreign language.

Lastly, its probability may be inferred from the fact spoken to by the parents of the children, that speaking soon comes so natural to them that they even talk, or repeat their lessons, in their sleep.

I will only add that those desirous of seeing for themselves what I have feebly attempted to describe, may do so on any Wednesday afternoon, at three o'clock, when a public lesson is given.

THEODORE R. WRIGHT.

TOKENS.



HEARD a blackbird at the close of day
Trill out its song against the amber
west;

I said, "Oh, bird, my love is far away!
Tell her my thought, and I shall be at
rest!"

The mellow-throated singer left its
bough,

And flew away amidst the twilight's fall;
And as I thought of young love's burning vow,
I wondered if that bird would tell her all.

I plucked a red rose from its parent tree;

I threw it in the stream that flowed along,

And said, "Sweet rose, oh, take a smile from me,

To where the blackbird speedeth with its song!"

I watched it take its way far down the stream,
With perfumed thoughts to her so young and
fair;

And wondered oft if e'er its crimson gleam
Would mingle with her locks of golden hair.

* * * * *

I dreamed I heard her voice, so low and sweet,
Sing those grand songs that all the spirit fill.

I knelt and lowly worshipped at her feet:

I woke and found my loved one singing still.

And then I knew the blackbird, in its song,

Had told her all the love my soul had sent;

And that the red rose had been borne along,

And found her ere its fragrance yet was spent.

ALEXANDER LAMONT.

FIAMMINA'S GARDEN.



"CAROLLED BY THE SPRING."

THERE were roses, seven and eight,
 In Fiammina's garden,
 And no one kept the gate,

And never heat might harden
 The soil, nor sun might spoil the green,
 Because there was so thick a screen
 Round Fiammina's garden.

The roses through thick myrtles
 Looked up into the sky,
 Wherein were billing turtles
 With nightingales hard by :
 Love heard his mother's darlings sing,
 He laid the dart against his string
 Through heaven and earth that hurtles.

Alas, for Fiammina !
 She sat and sang her ditty
 Like careless contadina,
 Whereof there comes the pity !

She careless carolled by the spring,
 And took no thought of dart or string,
 Sweet maiden Fiammina !

Love's arrow never glanceth,
 But hits whom he would hurt,
 And thus it often chanceth
 Maids get not their desert,
 But weep and wring through weary days,
 While all their wailing speaks his praise,
 And his delight enhanceth.

B. MONTGOMERIE RANKING.

A CAMPAIGN IN KABYLIA.

THE NARRATIVE OF A CHASSEUR D'AFRIQUE.

BY ERCKMANN-CHATRIAN.

CHAPTER THE FOURTH.

WHILST we were forming in order of battle, our auxiliary columns of Kabyles had been collecting themselves into one body ; for already, for more than half an hour, the column to our left, which was moving in the gravel beds, had crossed the river, and that on our right, which was keeping to the foot of the mountains, had descended into the valley ; so that instead of having them in our flanks as supporters, we now had them in our rear. And all these fine men and brave allies, in their full white burnouses, their long beards, and their guns, stood quietly waiting on the bank, to see what we should do next.

A few indeed had discharged their old muskets, for they knew that they could not carry half the distance.

This was not our business ; this was the concern of the Arab bureau.

Lieutenant Cayatte did not seem to trouble himself about them ; he extended his company in skirmishing order—and in five minutes, six saddles, in that fig-tree orchard, were emptied ; we learnt afterwards that two of the horsemen had died of their wounds ; the rest had gained their line of retreat, carrying off the wounded.

Thus the fight commenced.

And now bring the scene before your mind :—

The first company mount and go off at a gallop ; the Kabyles, concealed in the corn-fields, rise as fast as they can load, and fire upon them, rapidly retiring at the same time ; our men charge through the orchard and reach the top of the hill ; we, in the bottom, formed in readiness—impatient to be off—and behind us the officers of the Arab bureau, haranguing our auxiliaries to persuade them to pass the Sebaon.

The horseman Ali, of the Arab bureau, kept passing and repassing the river, to show them that it was not deep ; but these brave men, looking all the

while as solemn as patriarchs, pretended neither to see nor to hear him, when a ball hit his horse just in the middle of the forehead, and laid it dead in the stream. Then all at once our good friends, in the utmost excitement, uttered loud shouts, and threw themselves into the water, some to secure the bridle, others the saddle of the poor beast.

Ali reached the bank in safety, and came to join our reserves.

During this time, the first company had got two-thirds of the way up the hill ; and the firing was becoming more rapid.

All at once we saw, debouching in the rear of our first company on the right, a close column of Kabyles, with their broad green and yellow standard displayed ; they were coming on, full speed, to cut off the retreat of our men.

Lieutenant Arissy became aware of the danger in a moment.

"There is not a minute to lose," he cried ; "draw swords ! forward ! charge !"

And we darted off like a flash of lightning. In a very few moments we were in the orchard. There we had to pass in single file down a narrow ravine, and we threw ourselves out in line in the corn, just in front of the Kabyles, who did not wait for us a moment, but beat a hasty retreat.

We continued our charge up the first third of the hill, near to three or four old buildings, where a cactus hedge terminated, cutting the hill diagonally.

"Now, the best shots, dismount !" cried the lieutenant.

In a moment I was out of the saddle, and I handed the bridle to the trumpeter Lecomte, and asked him for his chassepot. Then I threaded the narrow passage between the buildings, in which ran a slender stream full of large stones, spotted with great stains of blood ; for it was by this way that the Kabyles had carried off their wounded.

At the end of the narrow lane was a field of corn. I found close to me the brigadier Péron, my orderly Cappcl, the old chasseurs Audot and Rouverdier; we knelt on one knee, and began firing.

Two or three mounted chasseurs on the other side of the hedge behind us were also firing over the cactuses. Lieutenant Arissy, smiling, mounted on his little bay pony, was pointing for us with his sword, in which direction to fire.

"To the right of the field—there are two slipping away. Attention!"

But they were approaching in closer and closer order, creeping on the ground, when with a sudden start the lieutenant cries—

"Every man to horse! Quick, quick! or we shall be outflanked."

I cried to the skirmishers, "Let us cross the fence again!"

But I had hardly reached the other side when all our men were in full retreat. The trumpeter Lecomte was on the point of galloping off with my horse in his hand. I angrily called him back. He threw the bridle to me, and spurred away in great haste.

I could hear the Kabyles running and calling to each other. My horse, seeing the others gone, became dangerously impatient to be gone too. I wanted to mount, but as the ground was on a slope, and the right side for getting on was down the incline beneath, I was unable to reach the stirrup; my saddle was turning round, my horse rearing to be gone.

The Kabyles were coming closer.

At last I got to the other, the wrong side. I pulled the saddle round, and with my rifle strap round my throat, and my sword between my legs, I contrived to get into the saddle.

It was time indeed.

I loosed the reins and the horse sprang off like lightning. The Kabyles, only twenty paces distant, had thought to take me alive; they might have shot me a hundred times; their cruelty and hatred had saved my life.

My horse, keeping the others in sight, darted down the hill, in the midst of balls flying like hail. I thus went on about a thousand yards, and then reached the brink of an immense declivity, at the foot of which stretched an arid plain; a narrow stream of water, slightly embanked, was winding along it; and behind the stream, amongst the tamarisks, our chasseurs of the first and second companies, deployed in skirmishing order, were kneeling ready to fire.

On arriving at the edge of the declivity, I saw Brigadier Péron, lying under his horse, unable to extricate his leg. I cried to him—

"Péron, fly! the Kabyles are after us!"

Then making a great effort, he drew out his leg;

but his scabbard was also caught under the horse, and it was impossible to pull it out. I said to him—

"Take off your sword-belt, and leave your scabbard behind."

He did so, and then descended the hill on all-fours, holding his gun in one hand and his sword-blade in the other.

We had not reached the bottom of the hill when the Kabyles were already at the top. Fortunately our chasseurs in ambush gave these first arrivals a warm reception, which enabled us to join the detachment.

As soon as we had arrived in the midst of our friends, I was glad to be able to dismount, to put my saddle right, and restore order in my equipment. Lieutenant Arissy, glad to see me again, came to shake hands with me.

At once we went again to present a new front in the dried-up bed of the river, and there we learnt with regret that the old chasseur Audot, as well as Rouverdier, had disappeared from our company. The chasseur Joseph, of the second company, had a ball in his thigh.

Péron took possession of Rouverdier's horse, which had joined us.

The Kabyles made as if they would have followed us. The black horseman, to lure them on, came down even to the foot of the hill, bravely discharged his rifle at us, and then calmly retreated with a slow step, till he reached his own men. The balls hailed round him, raising the dust, but we could not touch him.

He was a splendid soldier. No one said it, but it was felt all the same.

All the time of the firing our chasseurs were asking each other for cartridges; and then it was discovered to our dismay that there remained for the whole detachment only three packets.

Not a very pleasant prospect, at a distance of seven miles from Tizi-Ouzou!

If the Kabyles would but have shown themselves in the plain, we might have charged them sword in hand; but they kept to the higher ground.

We therefore recrossed the river, and again met our valuable auxiliaries, who had been so well supplied with cartridges. Their inward satisfaction was manifest in their countenances; fortunately they had no suspicion of our want of ammunition, or I have no doubt they would have attacked us without further loss of time.

All that was left for us to do was to return to Si-kou-Médour, which we therefore did, and in a couple of hours we were again at our starting-point; the horses, unbridled and unloaded, were quietly eating their rations of oats in the same spot where we had bivouacked in the morning; the men were cooking their soup, and six hundred yards in advance, in the direction of the enemy, stood one of our chasseurs on vedette.

We spent the night on the same spot. Towards evening, at sunset, came a mule with a load of cartridges, sent to us by the commandant of the district, Leblanc. A strong guard was set around us, for the enemy could not be far off; no doubt they would follow us. And all that night, thinking of my comrades who were lying dead behind the cactus hedge, I fancied I heard the jackals yelling to each other more loudly than the night before. I remarked upon it to old Abd-el-Kader, who replied that it was the rallying-cry of the Kabyles.

How many sad thoughts passed then through my mind, reflecting that but for an instant of time, I should have been consigned to the fate of the brave Rouverdiér and of old Audot. I wondered how they had been taken; no doubt Audot had fallen dead in the corn-field, where I last saw him. Rouverdiér had run to the end of the fence, hoping to escape by the old buildings, where the Kabyles were lying in wait for him. My thoughts were none of the brightest.

At last daylight came and the guard was relieved. Our rascally auxiliaries, the Kabyles, who had not quite left us yet, came in the midst of us. There was a talk of reinforcements from Tizi-Ouzou, of chasseurs-à-pied, of artillerymen, and so on; and a spahi even asserted that they were only a couple of miles over the Oued-Aïssi.

Our friends the Kabyles, seated in groups around us, were listening attentively, when in a moment, without any warning, the crack of a rifle is heard, no one can tell whence or how, and the sub-lieutenant, Arissy, who has been quietly watching his horses feed, with his hands crossed behind his back, utters a sudden cry; he has just received a ball from behind, which has broken his hip-bone and passed into the body.

The chasseurs were full of indignation, the Kabyles spoke not a word.

"Goguel," cried Lieutenant Cayatte to me, turning sharp round, "go to Tizi-Ouzou for the doctor."

I leaped into my saddle, and went off at full gallop.

After having crossed the Oued-Aïssi, I observed at a distance on the road a troop of chasseurs-à-pied, and of artillerymen; but there was no time either to tell news or ask for any.

On arriving at the fort, I learned that the old commandant, Leblanc, had been relieved of his command, and Monsieur Letellier, a young *chef de bataillon* of the First Zouaves, appointed in his place. I waited upon him to report the occurrence which had brought me there. He put me a few questions, and then issued orders for the sergeant to go, and at the same time to harness a cart, and bring back the wounded man.

I returned to the village slowly to give my horse breathing-time, when I met Sergeant Deveaux, the assistant to the schoolmaster at Tizi-Ouzou, who was

coming up to the fort, and who lost no time in telling me that sixty-six chasseurs-à-pied, armed with chassepots, commanded by two officers, had arrived that very morning, on their road to the National Fort, with thirty men of the train, and twenty-four artificers belonging to the tenth company of artillery, commanded by Sergeant-Major Erbs; but that since our defeat the whole tribe of the Beni-Raten had risen, and that therefore this detachment would stay at Tizi-Ouzou: that the commandant of the National Fort was also relieved of his duties, and replaced by Colonel Marchal, lieutenant-colonel of the Fourth Regiment of Chasseurs d'Afrique, who had refused to endanger his little detachment, and had ventured alone all through the insurgent country.

"He will be there by this time," said the sergeant, "unless he has had his throat cut by the way."

After having told me this news, the little Sergeant Deveaux said—

"I will leave you, for, you see, everybody is going up to the fort, all Kabylia is in insurrection, in a short time we shall be besieged. Colombain, the old schoolmaster, has already driven his cow there; but his wife and children are still at the school-house, securing what they can. Here come the two chères sœurs, with a pair of heavy baskets, and Monsieur le Curé's men carrying all his treasures. Thibaud at the officers' café is packing up his bottles, and there is Louis the butcher coming up trotting with his mule-cart; he has made already half a dozen journeys."

"Come now," said I to the sergeant; "it is quite plain that there are a few cowards here. The Kabyles will never come within fire of the guns of this fortress."

"Aha! Quartermaster Goguel," he answered, "I have not all my life been attached assistant-master to a school. I have seen twenty years' service; I have followed the First Zouaves in many expeditions, and I know those fellows better than you. In 1857 they gave us plenty of occupation, and long before that they had blockaded Colonel Beauprêtre in the old fort. Beauprêtre! what a splendid fellow! He was the man to deal with the Kabyles, and never spared their heads; consequently they respect him still, and say among themselves, 'He was a brave man—such a brave man!' With no more than thirty chasseurs in the fort, he kept them all at bay."

Sergeant Deveaux was going to tell me the whole story, but I was in a hurry.

"By-and-by" I cried; "I can't stop now." And I went on my way.

A couple of miles further on, I met our chasseurs, the drivers, and the artillerymen, who were returning at the double. I quickened my pace, and joined our detachment.

Every man was on horseback. Sergeant-Major Brissard was calling over the muster-roll; the Kabyle contingents standing around us were watching us keenly. Muster over, Lieutenant Cayatte, lighting his pipe, said quietly, "All are present."

He formed us by twos, and we filed past our good friends the Kabyles, whose bronzed countenances and dark gleaming eyes were not expressive of much affection for us. Brissard was in the front, I was in the centre, Ignar brought up the rear.

A moment before starting, as Brissard was passing near me, I whispered—

"You see those fellows: this morning they were our friends; so said the Arab bureau, at least. Now they are with the insurgents. Beware of the pass! If they can get up their courage when they see themselves ten against one, and their cartridge-boxes full, they will fire a volley upon us; not a man of the detachment will escape."

"Was that what you were thinking of, Goguel?" said he, with a knowing wink. "Well, the same notion has got into my head too."

After the word of command "March," we had to leap a narrow ditch to get into the road. The lieutenant placed himself at the very end of the column. Brissard passed first; then the two trumpeters: then the two baggage horses; then all the chasseurs cleared it one after the other. On the other side of the ditch we halted to form in ranks. Three-fourths of the column had sheathed their swords and slung their rifles; there remained only one man and the lieutenant.

Our backs were turned to the Kabyles; but I had instinctively turned round; and as the last chasseur, Ketterling, a young Alsatian, was going to jump, his horse missed his footing, and he fell into the ditch, the lieutenant standing alone on the other side. Ketterling raised himself up again, and was on horseback in a moment; and the lieutenant, having passed too, again commanded—

"March!"

The Kabyles stood motionless. They dared not attack us yet.

In two hours' time we were re-entering Tizi-Ouzou, headed by our trumpeter, having left Quartermaster Ignar with eight men, to keep the road open from Berton's Farm, at the distance of a mile and a half from the fort.

All the villagers were coming up into the fort behind us, weeping and lamenting, and carrying beds, mattresses, furniture, and provisions. Never had I beheld such a scene of alarm and distress.

We soldiers picketed our horses in the courtyard, and got into the barracks which we had left two days before.

In the evening at nine, the night being very dark, the commandant of the place, Letellier, sent orders

to Quartermaster Ignar to draw nearer with his men, and to guard the road by the Roman fountain, which is only about six hundred yards from the fort, and on the road by which we had just entered the place.

A quiet night followed.

Next morning, Lieutenant Cayatte took me with thirty men to make a reconnaissance on the road to Si-kou-Médour. Passing near to Ignar, he ordered him back to the fort; then we pushed on as far as Berton's Farm, where we could see nothing remarkable. We therefore retraced our steps, returning by the old road, which runs by the *gendarmérie*, and passes the Arab cemetery.

The lieutenant ascended a knoll on the left, which commands a view of the valley, and observing nothing, we descended, crossing the road to climb another hill in front of Tizi-Ouzou, where in 1857 stood a redoubt.

The lieutenant, having examined the country round, said to me—

"Goguel, you will remain here with ten men and a corporal. You will throw out three vedettes—one to watch in the direction of Maatka, one up the Valley of Sebaon, and the third at the foot of the mountain where the Marabout Dubelloi lives."*

Then he went off with the rest of the men, after having instructed me, if I should notice anything, to send the corporal and report to the commandant.

About ten, as I was quietly smoking my pipe and looking first one way and then another, suddenly I saw some Arabs crossing the river and approaching the house of the road surveyor. They broke in the door, and in two minutes the flames were leaping on the roof; but the villains were out of the range of our rifles.

Then I could see them coming out, and making for the Berton Farm. Notwithstanding the impossibility of hitting them, I tried to send them a few bullets, but they fell short. Presently the buildings begin to blaze, the roof falls in, and the four walls alone remain standing.

Whilst we were gazing in helpless dismay with arms crossed, there appeared in another direction from the entrance of the pass, and moving towards the Maatka, a long line of Arabs in white burnouses, leading their mules by the bridle. It was Caïd Ali's army, passing from tribe to tribe, summoning them to join the insurrection, or to be burnt out.

As a matter of course, means such as these might swell the body of the insurgents at a very rapid rate. The green and yellow standards were flying in the front.

The commandant, Letellier, sent a few shells amongst them, which served to drive them closer

* A Marabout is a Mahomedan priest; his residence is also called a Marabout.

to the foot of the mountain; but the marching proceeded without confusion.

At nightfall, Quartermaster Ignar came to recall me with my ten men; we therefore fell back upon the fort.

We had not been long back, when the pillagers were already swarming in the Arab village; then

they invaded the European village, which had been abandoned the evening before. The commandant immediately ordered out the militia, supported by a few chasseurs-à-pied, to drive them out. A pretty sharp fire of musketry followed, and many Kabyles were killed; but others filled their places.

END OF CHAPTER THE FOURTH.

EGGS IS EGGS."



COOKERY is the mode now. No excuse is needed for bringing to the front patty-pans, salamanders, rolling-pins, casseroles. All eyes and all ears are opened for the useful implements -- bright or blackened, deal or metal, whatever they may be. Some eyes and some ears would be disappointed if they were put back again on the shelves in the kitchen or the scullery, without a magic toss or turn effected by them, without a complex culinary secret getting frank and comprehensible disclosure. So, with these hitherto neglected articles used even as a basis for scientific disquisitions, undoubtedly they may be looked in upon, and taken by the hand, for a little of the best-natured and briefest *causerie*.

Besides, it happened once that the sheen of the inside of a brass stew-pan was grateful to the master-eyes of Teniers. It happened once that to see a turnip pared, some peas podded, a red pan of flour moistened and deftly kneaded, to see fat poultry poised, or a wrinkled cabbage laid in a tub to soak, had poetry and interest for those other master-eyes of De Hooght, of Maas, of Berghem. It has come again; that is what it amounts to; and let there be no shamed cheeks, no downcast eyes at the revival—only a sleeved and slight guffaw. Where such men lod, there can be no harm to follow.

Eggs. That is the text, and it must have adherence. Eggs; and French eggs; as commented on by *la cuisinière des cuisinières*, the cook of cooks, the sort of feminine Shah-in-shah, who made her commenting in the year 1844, at Paris, and whose comments were reviewed by Mozard, Ex-Chef d'Office. This *cuisinière des cuisinières* knew all about eggs, of course; so do the English. The English have positively (let it be correctly calculated) three ways of dressing them. It is a continent of variety. By judicious exercise of this large power, eggs may be boiled (and hard, or soft, or medium; that is another branch, to be taken under different heads); eggs may be poached; eggs may be fried, and served up with the national rasher.

There is also said to be reason in roasting eggs; but as this is debateable, it shall be passed by. Three modes are law; the English are a law-abiding nation; that is enough.

Pouf! *La cuisinière des cuisinières* begins her chapter on eggs with a little essay about them, and finishes up by demonstrating twenty-four methods by which they can be made into appetising food. She clears up an old joke, too. An errand after pigeon's milk is one on which many a raw youngster has been dispatched on many a first of April. The cook of cooks explains it, and thereby adds one more to the two dozen recipes just mentioned, by way of good measure. The yolk of a fresh egg, she says, beaten (*délayé*) in hot water, with a little sugar, and drunk on going to bed, is good for a cold; it is this that is called *lait de poule*—hen's milk; and cousin-german to the pigeon's, most assuredly; only the Gallic cock gave the honour to his wife, naturally, leaving perfidious Albion to throw the mantle on the dove. This is good. So it is when the nice cook, after advising her readers to "amass" eggs when they are plentiful, and telling them to lay them in a cask with straw, or hay, or saw-dust, or chaff, or ashes, goes on to the gist of her egg-chapter proper.

Des œufs mollets (soft-boiled eggs) is her commencement. She recommends a *hors-d'œuvre* of them, a side-dish, a "make-up;" and it is to be done by "retiring them promptly" into cold water after they have boiled five minutes, and by carefully peeling them so that they do not break. Served entire thus, and heaped up into a pretty shape upon a dish, they may have—one, two, three—seven sauces poured over them; to wit, *sauce blanche, verte, au coulis, aux câpres et anchois, aux verjus en grains, Robert, or ravigote*; and either one of these sauces may be rendered nicer still by a dash of any out of eight relishes, or *ragoûts*; viz., *ragoût de champignons, de truffes, de riz de veau, d'asperges, de cardes-poirées* (beet-stalks) *de celeri, de laitue, and de chicorée*. Does it not sound as good, quite, as a lord mayor's feast? And it may be eaten, says this suggestive *cuisinière*, either during feasts or fasts (*en gras et en maigre*), after whichever of the *façons* you may judge *à propos*. Ay, but the labour is to make the judgment! Who

could? It would produce lunacy—or a revolution ; which is probably the reason, nay, the Government conspiracy and policy, for keeping the knowledge of such *façons* far out of the British Isles.

To boil eggs, in the English manner, stands in the cook's list only number two. So treated, they are called *aufs à la coque*, in the shell ; and there is only one way to do them that is *immanquable*. Let them boil for two minutes, and then serve them in a table-napkin. Not in egg-cups, be it noted ; and not with any reference to individual taste for soft yolks, firm whites, and so forth—branch A, heads 1 2 3, before mentioned. It restores reason, does this arbitrary settlement. There is solidity in it ; and after it may come procedure.

Des œufs brouillés presents the cook with another clever turn. Now, to *brouiller*, according to the dictionary, is to jumble, to shuffle, to perplex, confuse, disorder, and confound ; and it sounds a little difficult to do this to an egg. Not at all. For though to *brouiller* the estate is to cause an insurrection, and to *brouiller la cervelle* is to derange or turn the brain, it is quite possible to so jumble and shuffle a certain quantity of eggs that they shall be what the English call *beaten* ; and this is what the *cuisinère* intends. When this is done, the beaten matter is to be put into a *casserole* (a copper pan), with a little butter, and two spoonfuls of *ragoût de coulis* ; it is to be set on an oven to be made *cuire*, stirred up the while with a *bâton* of two or three branches. But the spoonfuls of *ragoût de coulis* will not do for a *jour maigre* at this stage of the cook's convictions. Omit them, at that unhappy time, and put in place half the quantity of cream.

What has made her thus unsteady and inconsistent? *Coulis* is gravy, it is true ; but so was *coulis* gravy when it was to be added to an *auf mollet*, and when that *would* do for fast-time !

It overpowers ; it produces giddiness again ; it had better be left.

Let *les œufs frits* be taken. Of these there can be made an *entremets*, which may be interpreted a dainty-dish, a cover served at great men's tables before the fruit (*vide* Boyer). To do it *en gras*, ordinary feast-time, the frying may be in lard ; but, note the theological distinction, in fasts it must be done with melted butter. It deserves attention. So does the fact that instead of the French saying, with truly British beauty, such and such a thing is "gone to pot," they say, "It is all fried"—*Tout est frit* ; and they say well ; for whether a material is under the pot-lid, gone that way, or frizzling away in spitting lard or butter, it means the same end, and as both illustrations come from cookery, they coincide with the present tastes admirably.

Des œufs aux épinards ; that is the next tune. A layer of poached eggs, with a hillock, or haycock, of spinach laid upon it? No, no, no. Spinach is to be boiled *in water*, is to be squeezed, pounded,

strained, and mixed up (*délayé*) with six eggs and some good cream ; it is to be strained again ; to have sugar put to it, and pounded macaroons, and orange-flower water, and *une idée de sel* ; and then it is to be baked by a slow fire till a little of it sticks to the bottom of the dish. Is *that* a novelty, and a nicety, and, in short, a dainty-dish, an *entremets*? Surely, ; and one to rival, perilously, the four-and-twenty blackbirds baked in a pie that formed a royal *entremets* once, and that must have been a lively prologue "just before the fruit."

How, too, would have been *aufs à la baignolet*? And *aufs au plat*, otherwise called "eggs of the mirror?" For the last is wanted *la pelle rouge*—the red shovel, *alias* the British salamander ; and it sounds like heavy business. Its achievements are disappointingly small, though. It simply scorches the top of the eggs when they have been seasoned with salt and pepper and three spoonfuls of milk. That is very poor ; not worth calling a *hors-d'œuvre*—otherwise, on the authority of M. Boyer, a by-dish, a kickshaw. But the cook of cooks *does* call it a *hors-d'œuvre*, and passes on to the remainder of her two dozen varieties with truly Parisian complacency. She gives *aufs au lait*, œufs with tripe, with cucumbers, with cream, with cheese, with bread. She gives Huguenot eggs, and Bourgeois eggs, and lady-gardener eggs, and water eggs, and eggs in threads, and eggs with *petit lard* (streaked bacon ; and of course, omelettes, with herrings, with ham, with asparagus, with truffles, with mushrooms, with calves' kidneys, with—*de toutes façons* conceivable.

Some of these names seem badly chosen. Water eggs, for example. There is wanted for this dish a *chopine* (a pint) of water, it is true ; but there must also be taken some sugar, some essence of orange-flowers, and some candied lemon. The flavour of these touches ; it gives something vastly other than if the water had been left pure, as the title would seem to infer. And as for the materials and implements used by the cook of cooks, the thought of them is nothing short of distracting... Garlic, anchovies, oil, flour, Gruyère, Parmesan, nutmeg, white wine, parsley, mustard, chives, onions, broth, or "stock," in addition to those mentioned as they occur ; what are English people to do who live in towns, and who must go and buy everything in shops, in place of walking coquettishly into a kitchen garden and gathering a "bouquet of herbs" the moment it is required? Well, they cannot do all, that is clear. It will be well if they remember that "eggs *is* eggs" (they have been told it often enough), and if they make them more into real dishes than they have been made before. To count chickens before they are hatched is not wise, to a certainty, but to treat eggs as if they were already chickens, and to get nourishment and variety out of them, is scarcely open to the same objection.

HESTER MORLEY'S PROMISE.

BY HESBA STRETTON,

AUTHOR OF "THE DOCTOR'S DILEMMA," ETC. ETC.

CHAPTER THE THIRTY-FIFTH.

WHERE WILL THEY GO?

"WHAT is it, father?" Hester asked in steady and tender tones; "tell me all that has happened to you."

He was silent for some time, his eyes fixed upon the dark line of shore they could yet see as they were leaving it behind them. Hester asked herself if all this was true—that they, her father and herself, were escaping secretly by night from England, where only a few hours ago she had been listening to Carl in his own chapel. It was all too real, astounding as it was, for her to doubt its truth; it was too wild to be a trick of her sleep.

The great sea spread around them—the sea she had never seen, which she would never see again without remembering this night, indelibly stamped upon her brain. Without moving or speaking, she sat beside her father, waiting for him to break the silence.

"I scarcely know how it all happened," he said at last, in the tone of one thinking aloud. "Rose was there—not her ghost; it could not have been that, for the stain of blood came off upon my hands, and I smeared my hair with it. She was dead when I went into the room—murdered; but who could have murdered her? I would not have touched a hair of her head. Such pretty hair it used to be, as golden as the sunlight. But then, you see, nobody would have believed that I was not the murderer. I do not know myself who could have been so cruel, so fierce; and she had harmed no one as she had harmed me. All the world would have said I was guilty; and if they had not hanged me, they would have imprisoned me as mad, though I should swear I did not do it. So I say I will flee—I will escape from my country while there is time. It would be a most horrible thing for my daughter, if her father was hanged as a murderer, or shut up as a madman."

Hester's heart had grown faint and sick as she listened to her father's almost unconscious and delirious sentences. But at this moment the captain came up to ask them if they would not go below, and she had to control herself to answer him quietly.

"My father is ill," she answered, "and we would rather stay here a little while. By-and-by we will go down."

He stayed beside them for a few minutes, making some observations, which she scarcely heard,

though she exerted herself to reply to them; and then he left them once more to themselves.

"Father," she said earnestly, "answer me a question or two. How did you find out she was at home?"

"I came in from chapel at twenty minutes to eight," he said, "and sat down in my own chair; but I could not read. All at once I heard the sound of her piano, and, some minutes after, a strange noise, between a scream and a sob. Then, just as the clock was striking eight, I went up-stairs, and there was a light shining in her room, and I went to look in, and Rose was there—Rose herself; not her spirit."

"Did you speak to her?" asked Hester.

"No," he answered; "my tongue refused its office. I went up to her, and laid my hand upon her, but she never moved. Then I saw her hair all clotted with blood, and I lifted up her head, and found that she was gone far away from me, where no man knoweth love or hatred. She was dead—murdered, and could never be pardoned by me."

"But how could it be?" cried Hester, who could scarcely realise the fact that Rose was dead, in the horror of hearing that she had been murdered."

"I know nothing," said John Morley gloomily. "We were alone in the house. It was I who found her. My hands and hair were stained with her blood. If I had given myself up, they could have done nothing else but punish me for the crime. But I am innocent, Hester—as innocent as yourself."

"And did you leave her there?" she asked.

"I carried her to the sofa," he said, "and laid her down gently. She was dead, and I could kiss her again. I covered her over with a grey shawl which was stained red. The candle was almost burnt out, and I could stay no longer. Yes, I left her there; and she lies there now, perhaps. They may not discover I am gone very quickly, for nobody goes into that room. I think I have been almost mad all day, but I am better now with you, Hester. Oh, Hester, be very pitiful towards me!"

He broke out suddenly into low, smothered moans and wailings, and put his arms round her, resting his head upon her shoulder, while she pressed her lips again and again to his face, and told him that she was his daughter, his child, who could never forsake him, never feel anything but love and pity for him. So she soothed him, crushing down the grief and terror of her own heart,

and seeking the most tender expressions of her affection for him. He grew calm at last, calmer than he had been for many days.

"Did I do right in fleeing?" he asked anxiously. "I could bear it no longer. My dishonour has been a burden as heavy as I could bear, and this would have been too much. I must have lost my reason, if they had not made it seem that I had lost it before. Do you think me mad, Hester?"

"No, my dear," she answered. He clung so

against Robert Waldron? How was she to be sure of that? Rose was dead, murdered. Who could be guilty, if it were not her father? She felt a steadfast, child-like loyalty towards him. If he were criminal, her calm, innocent, simple nature would understand the character of his crime better than a more worldly and more divided heart could have done.

It was most heinous, terrible, mournful, but not unpardonable: not without extenuating circumstances. She must think for him and take the



"WE HAVE HAD A VERY FINE PASSAGE."

much to her like a child, that unconsciously her voice and expression were those of one who talks to a child. There were many things she wanted to learn yet, and she must keep him as calm as possible.

"But I am almost mad," he said; "I have neither a sound mind nor a sound body. I have destroyed them both. O my God! what is to become of us?"

A cry which Hester echoed in her heart of hearts. She knew that his words were true: that he had been dwelling too long on the border-land between sanity and insanity. But then, was it indeed true that his hand had not been suddenly hurried into a deed of violence such as he had committed

guidance of his flight. To her fell the choice of a city of refuge.

"Where are we going to?" she asked, and the simplicity of her question struck her forcibly amidst the perplexity of their circumstances.

"We are going to Paris," he answered; "after that, anywhere—anywhere that I can be safe."

The morning dawned before Hester could form any plan for the future. She saw the pale streaks of light coming across the smooth level of the sea, and playing upon the edge of its soft ripple. Her father had fallen into an uneasy slumber, and his dress and hers were wet with the heavy dew of the night.

She had been tempted to wish that both of them

could be lost amidst the multitude of waves, and lie together in peace with the depths closing them about, and the weeds wrapped around their heads.

The captain came and looked compassionately upon her father's pallid face, and she called a shadowy smile to her lips and eyes as she met his gaze.

"Good morning," he said in a low tone; "we have had a very fine passage across."

"Yes," she answered.

"You have crossed before?" he continued.

"No," said Hester.

"Well, there is no trouble; the omnibus will be at the gate of the custom-house to take you straight on to the station. I will get your luggage passed quickly."

"We have scarcely any luggage," she answered with an inward tremor; "only my father's portmanteau. I shall buy all I want in Paris."

"To be sure," said the captain; "you will get everything in the first fashion there."

A spasm of hysterical laughter contracted Hester's throat, and played oddly upon her face. A flash of the grotesque darted across the profound darkness of her circumstances; but it brought with it a vivid quickening of her oppressed brain. She saw what she could do. She would pass quickly through Paris with her father, not tarrying there at all, and go on to Burgundy. She knew well by the minute description of Lawson's mother, the little town from which she had come. It was a very quiet, very remote place, several leagues from the nearest line of rail, and where the visit of any English was an almost unheard-of thing. In this hour of keen mental activity she could recollect the names of the curé, the doctor, the baker even; all whose histories the garrulous old Frenchwoman had loved to narrate. The little town did not seem strange to Hester. It offered her an asylum from afar off within its old grey walls. She knew the patois of the province well; she could speak it as freely as the purer French that Robert Waldron had perfected her in.

This should be their city of refuge.

CHAPTER THE THIRTY-SIXTH.

A CITY OF REFUGE.

HESTER experienced no difficulty in making her way through Paris. Her habit of conversing in French with Lawson and his mother had given her a fluent use of the language; and though her manner and appearance, as well as her father's, were unmistakably English, she had no need to attach unusual attention to them by any ignorance or difficulty on her part. She made inquiries as to the route for Burgundy, and went at once from one station to the other, staying no more than a few

hours in Paris. They arrived in safety, and without observation, at the small country station to which they were bound. There were yet six leagues to accomplish before reaching Ecquemonville; but an omnibus from that town was waiting for the train.

It was a four hours' journey, for the diligence was heavy and cumbrous, and the cart-horses attached to it by rope-harness were slow-footed; four miles and a half in an hour was the utmost speed they could attain. After the rapid whirl and the overwhelming excitement of the last thirty-six hours, Hester found a relief in the slow progress of their conveyance. She was worn out, and her heavy eyes scarcely saw the strange country they were traversing; but John Morley was all eager and surprised attention. They were crossing a level plain of several miles, with neither hedgerows nor clumps of trees to vary its uniform aspect, except that here and there, at the interval of two or three miles, they passed a coppice of stone-pines; and that very far away, in the marvellous clear light of the distance, there stretched a black, irregular line against the horizon, which spoke plainly of a forest. Since the moment that the steamer had quitted the pier at Folkestone, John Morley had abandoned himself implicitly to Hester's guidance.

He did not ask where she was taking him; though his mind was all alert to the impressions the novel scenery was producing upon it. He had never been out of England; and, as we know, for the last eleven years he had travelled no farther from his house than to the chapel where he had once been wont to worship. He had passed through sharp dolour and sore travail, and come out after a sharper and sorer pang into this new life, where all was fresh and strange to him. His brain, with a healing forgetfulness, refused to recall the later scenes through which he had come. Everything about his route diverted his thoughts. The blue blouses of the peasantry, the coquettish snow-white caps of the country-women, the jingle of the bells about the horse-gear, the wonderful blue of the sky, the clear dark shadows, the golden harvest of the vast plain ripening in the full light of the June sun, withdrew him from his morbid musings. By fine gradations, as fine as the footsteps with which the morning steals towards the sleeping earth, his bent and heavy eyebrows relaxed a little, and the rigidity of his lips softened. One might have said towards the close of their journey, when they came in sight of the little town, lying in a valley, and girded about with vineyards, with grey old walls, and narrow gateways, giving it the aspect of a true city of refuge—one might have said that his face kindled with a smile struggling from his soul, but scarcely strong enough to reach the surface.

The only thoughts Hester's weary mind could

retain had been anxious ones. Her father had given up his pocket-book to her ; and she had found in it notes for a hundred pounds, the residue of the money lent by Mr. Waldron. She knew pretty well the cost of living in this remote part of Burgundy, and that this sum, with her thrifty economy, would keep them well for eighteen months or more. But what was to become of them? Were they really exiled for ever from England and Little Aston? Safe they would be, but what a safety!

The diligence entered Ecquemenville under a gateway in the thick walls, with the old gates still upon their hinges, grown over with lichens and mosses. It stopped before an inn on one side of the square which formed the market-place, with an obelisk in its centre. A group of curious loungers awaited its arrival, and a bevy of laundresses, who were washing at a fountain close by, paused in their work as it drove up.

Hester and her father descended from it, and caused as great a sensation as if they had fallen in their midst from the clouds. But with these exceptions, the place was all silent and deserted; not a creature was to be seen, for the sultry heat of the afternoon had driven the townspeople to their coolest retreats.

"Can you tell me if the widow Leinet has apartments to let now?" asked Hester of the conductor of the diligence, who had been staring at her and her father ever since descending from his high seat, without blinking his eyelids once, and whose eyes opened still wider at this question.

"The *veuve Leinet*!" he stammered: "is it that madame knows *veuve Leinet*?"

"No," she answered with a wan smile, "but I have heard she sometimes has rooms to let; and as we may stay here some time, I prefer going there to living at an hotel."

He would conduct them to the widow Leinet's, he said; and they followed him, Hester recognising the place from the minute and frequent descriptions of Lawson's mother. Here were the shops, with their odd miscellany of wares, the cafés painted in gay colours, the butchers' open stalls with their dwarf orange-trees and flowers, which madame had loved to contrast with the dingy streets of Little Aston.

Towards one corner of the square, five or six of the shops, having their upper floor projecting above them for eight feet or more, were as cool and almost as dark as cellars. At one of these their conductor stopped, and called aloud for the widow Leinet, who appeared from some minor recess, and engaged at once in a combat of words with the guide, so garrulous and voluble that Hester could not put in a syllable for some time.

"We have been recommended to you," she said, recollecting how often Lawson's mother had urged her to go to Burgundy; "my father and I want some

rooms for several months. He cannot speak French. Will you let us look at your apartments?"

The widow Leinet led the way up-stairs to the room projecting over the shop—an odd place to English eyes. The walls had been stencilled in gaudy colours and grotesque designs. The uncarpeted floor had been waxed and brushed to a dangerous polish. A bed, with red cotton hangings, stood in a recess, but the rest of the furniture was evidently intended to serve for a sitting-room. A closet opened out of it, containing a smaller bed, which Hester decided would do very well for herself.

The accommodation was simple but inexpensive; eight francs a week, with attendance, being the rent the widow Leinet asked for it.

In a short time John Morley and Hester were seated at the centre table, with an impromptu meal before them of omelettes, and dried fruits, and cherries such as are never to be tasted in England. John Morley ate heartily, but in vague amazement. The voluble elderly Frenchwoman trotting in and out with some utterly foreign dish in her hand, and an unintelligible jargon on her tongue; the bottles of wine she brought in, which she held up between his eye and the light that he might see the golden bubbles imprisoned in them; the ease with which Hester understood and answered; all was odd and inexplicable, but he would yield himself to it. There was something terrible in the past, over which a thick curtain had fallen, and he would not lift it so long as it would hang there undisturbed.

That night Hester slept a heavy, dreamless sleep—the utter sleep of exhaustion, when the brain slumbers as profoundly as the body. Nature exacted this repose rigorously; and now that the immediate strain was over, now that the walls of the city encompassed them about, Hester could yield herself to it.

She slept very far into the next day, and found, when she awoke, her father sitting at her side, watching her with the care and tenderness of a mother.

CHAPTER THE THIRTY-SEVENTH.

SATURDAY NIGHT.

ON the Saturday evening, when John Morley was fleeing in a panic of fear from his own home and town, he had scarcely passed the chapel before Madame Lawson emerged from the narrow alley opposite to it.

It was growing quite dusk, a season which the old foreigner preferred for her walks, in consequence, as she said, of the impoliteness of the English boys, who generally hailed her appearance with numerous hints of observation. She had left her son comfortably settled for the night, with permission to sleep in her own bed, which preserved its air of state in the English garret. She knocked

in vain for some time at John Morley's house-door, but at last she tried the handle, which turned readily in her grasp. It was very still within, but a light was shining in the inner room, and she proceeded there boldly. It was John Morley's lamp burning as he had left it, and shedding its accustomed gleam upon the books scattered around it.

Madame puckered her eyebrows, and hummed a little song, but no voice or sound answered her. She took up the lamp and went into the kitchen; all was quiet and orderly there as the servant had left it, with the fire almost dead in the bottom of the grate. Up-stairs, with the lamp still in her hands, for it was quite dark now inside the house, proceeded madame, peering through each open door as she passed it.

No one was to be seen. Where then was monsieur? and where was the servant?

She could not have held any conversation with either of them, but she wished to see their faces and make her salutation to them. The still solitude daunted her; and she crossed herself several times, uttering a little prayer, as she had hummed a tune down-stairs. There was another door open at the end of the passage, and she went on towards it. A faint scent of mould and mildew met her, like the air from a vault. Upon the bare planks she was treading there were spots of blood, but her eyes did not detect them. She entered the room, and looked around her. There, upon the sofa, lay a woman, perfectly motionless, with a shawl laid over her.

Madame, frightened now, but brave with the courage of old age, approached her and raised the covering from her face.

A marble face, icy cold, with rigid lips and frozen eyelids; the hands also chilly and numb. Yet to her experienced touch—for in her station an aged woman has felt the clay-cold frigidity of death too often to be easily deceived—there was still a degree of warmth which spoke of life lingering about the heart.

She saw quickly that there was little which she could do, and that immediate help was necessary; but how could she make any one understand that she wanted Mr. Grant called in? Her shrewdness, a French subtlety, which made her keen at scenting any intrigue, recoiled from the idea of bringing this incident before the public if it could be avoided.

She quickly raised Rose's head a little, put a drop or two of eau de vie, which she carried about her, into her mouth; and then locking the front door carefully, to provide against any other intrusion like her own, she hastened as quickly as she could to Grant's house.

Fortunately for the explanation of her errand, she saw, upon approaching the house, Robert Wal-

dron standing at the gate in conversation with Grant.

The twilight had not quite faded here outside of the town, and a soft exquisite tranquillity, the indescribable sense of repose which can only exist at the end of the week, before the dawn of a day of rest and truce with labour, pervaded the whole evening scene. Within the house Annie was just kindling a light, and she could be seen, with her bright face, leaning over the new flame in the lamp.

Robert had just looked in, and sighed to himself as he talked with Grant, whose lot seemed so much more enviable than his own, when madame threw herself upon his arm, and poured forth her hurried story, which came like a crash of thunder upon him.

"Good heavens! what is the matter?" cried Grant, as Robert recoiled, and caught at the gate to keep himself from falling.

"He has discovered her and murdered her!" gasped Robert; "come—there is life yet, she says. Be quick, Grant. Come with me instantly!"

He had recovered himself while he was speaking, and darted off at full speed down the street, followed by Grant, who knew no more of what had taken place than the few incoherent words of Robert conveyed to him.

They had both to wait for a few minutes at the door, and then Robert, still wildly and waveringly, told him what madame had said—that a woman lay nearly dead in the house, and that neither John Morley nor Hester was to be found. She was almost murdered, he repeated, in a voice of extreme terror; and what would become of him and Hester?

As soon as the door was opened, Robert strode through the house into the court beyond, and up the staircase to the loft, where he expected to find Rose. The poor place was empty; the window had been left open, and the wind was flapping the curtain to and fro gaily, and fluttering the leaves of an open book upon the window-sill. He turned away from it with the last gleam of self-complacency faded from his face. Grant, who had followed him closely, had already descended into the court, and was obeying the vehement gesticulations of madame. Robert could not stay behind. An irresistible impulse carried him on to see the thing he dreaded; though, like one running swiftly down-hill, he might be about to cast himself into some gulch which would swallow him up in hopeless remorse. He overtook Grant at the door of the drawing-room, and thrust him roughly on one side. The lamp burned brightly, revealing to him the scene he had so often looked upon. He saw the room as Rose had seen it: his glove lying upon the table; the open piano with the music upon it; Hester's little seat beside his chair. And there lay Rose upon

her sofa, with a shawl thrown over her, looking as if she slept.

He then trode softly nearer to her, and stood beside her, not heeding in the profound abstraction how solemn and silent Grant was. Her attitude was peaceful, full of rest and quiet, the hair half hiding her face from his view. But he could not stir, and when he tried to speak his voice was hollow and inarticulate. He would have sacrificed his own life readily at that instant to call her to the life and happiness she had forfeited.

How long he stood there he did not know; but at length Grant put him aside gently, and lifted up the tangled and matted hair with his hand. There was the wound; a stroke like that which had nearly slain him had fallen upon her as well. "This was his work," said his conscience, so long dethroned, but now asserting itself with mightier tyranny. He looked into Grant's face, and shuddered at the expression upon it.

"She is not quite dead, my poor fellow," said Grant pityingly; "you recovered from a severer blow; but she is a woman, and delicate. We must not hope too much."

For some time they were busy about the almost lifeless form: Robert obeying mechanically the directions of Grant, and translating his orders to the Frenchwoman. They carried Rose to Hester's bed-room, and laid her upon her bed. When all was done which Grant could do, he went downstairs with Robert into John Morley's parlour.

"You know who she is?" said Robert, avoiding Grant's eye.

"I have guessed," answered Grant briefly.

"He must have found her," continued Robert. "Hester sheltered her here without his knowledge. I only knew of it while he was ill a few weeks ago. But where can they be gone to?"

"They have made their escape," answered Grant; "yet it can only be by an hour or two at the utmost. Must we pursue them?"

"Pursue them!" ejaculated Robert; "what for? Good God! what are we to do? If we bring him back, and she dies——"

He did not finish his sentence, but sank down into John Morley's chair, looking up to Grant with a face as haggard as that of the man he had wronged.

"If she dies, he would be punished as a murderer," said Grant; "but living and escaping, he is a madman—and he takes Hester with him! He is mad—I could swear to it—and he has Hester in his power!"

A miserable silence fell upon them both, as they turned over in their minds the wretched alternative presented to them. The life of Rose hung upon a thread which might snap at any moment; and to bring back John Morley, whether she lived or died, would be to subject him to a criminal pro-

secution, in which he could not fail to be found guilty.

As yet the secret was their own, and could be confined to very few—themselves, Annie, Lawson's mother, and Lawson himself perhaps, who was devoted to John Morley. The most imminent danger to Rose would be over during the next twenty-four hours; and till then, it being Sunday, John Morley's flight would remain unknown and unsuspected by his townspeople. He would have time to make good his escape. But, on the other hand, if they let him go, they left Hester in his power, under the control of a madman, at the very moment when he was most frenzied by his recent act of vengeance.

It seemed impossible to leave her thus. A flood of passionate tenderness swept across the tempest of remorse and anguish on which Robert Waldron was tossed.

He would have been willing to give her into the charge and protection of Carl himself, if by that he could only be sure that she was safe and, at last, happy.

"Ought we not to tell your father?" asked Grant; "he is a magistrate, and we should incur great responsibility by keeping this matter secret. Suppose she should die!"

"We must run the risk," answered Robert, after a moment's consideration; "I will shield you if any blame comes to us. No, no; if we tell my father, his duty as a magistrate would be to send in pursuit of John Morley. Grant, we must let him get off; but for Hester's sake I must follow them myself."

"Where would they be likely to go?" said Grant. "Hester has never been away from Little Aston, and he has not stirred out of it for years. Let us look about and see if we can find any clue."

"And then I will go down to the station," added Robert.

They went up-stairs to John Morley's bed-room. Everything there bore the marks of confusion and haste.

The drawers were left partly open, and the clothes in them were tossed about. Those which Rose had laid out for the next day still lay neatly folded upon a chair by the bedside. The basin was half-full of crimsoned water, and there were stains of blood upon the dressing-table. No doubt had existed in their minds before as to who had been guilty, and everything there fastened the crime upon John Morley. But they could discover no trace of flight about Hester's room. There all was maidenly order: a delicate, innocent, girlish harmony, which it had seemed almost sacrilege to disturb when they laid Rose upon her bed.

"I will go down to the station," repeated Robert Waldron.

A ROMANCE IN A NUT-SHELL.



BERTON? Who can she be? Surely I ought to remember her, since she seems to recollect me so well; for it is an awkward thing, this, to get a letter from a lady, written in a familiar sort of way, talking of "old times" and "years ago," asking my advice, and wanting me to go and see her, and I unable to remember.

By-the-by, I suppose it is a lady. Let me look again at the letter; yes, it must be. The handwriting is certainly not a man's, neither is the composition. Listen to this for instance: "I am emboldened to write to you on the strength of old times, and because, if you are as kind-hearted, generous, and indulgent as you used to be, you will readily forgive an old friend, whose recollections of you are so happy and so pleasant. Do you remember the time we spent at that most primitive of all villages? how you taught me German when we rambled on the sea-shore? I often think of those days, and how kind you were to me."

That sounds very nice; but I don't recollect anything about it. When did I ever ramble on the sea-shore on a summer's evening, teaching a young lady German? Young lady, did I say? Well, of course, it must have been a young lady. I wonder what she was like—tall or short, dark or fair? What was her name, too? She signs herself, "A. Berton." Let me see, what names begin with A—Annie, Arabella, Alice, Avie, Adèle—ah, wait—I have some faint notion of some one, very long ago—twenty years, and perhaps more, and I think she was called Adèle—Adèle Berton; yes, that sounds like a name I have heard before. But where did I see her? Primitive village, sea-shore, and I a young fellow of one or two-and-twenty? Yes—I have it; surely I went to Vignelles once, when it was nothing but a collection of fishing-huts, long before it became a fashionable watering-place? Of course I did, and it was there I saw Adèle Berton. How could I be so stupid as to forget it? how could I forget Adèle? Who was she? why, simply the loveliest girl I ever saw. I wonder what she is like now! Describe her to you? tell you all about it? With pleasure, as far as I can, only let me collect my thoughts a little, and think how it all came about—it was so long ago. Yes, I begin to recollect now; I dare say it will come back to me as I tell you. Shall I begin at the beginning?

It must have been at least twenty years ago that I received a letter from a friend, asking me to join him in Algiers, where he had gone for his health, and giving me such a description of the place as he thought would tickle my artistic fancy. I did not care much about going, but I wanted a

change; so I wrote and told him that perhaps I would come; and I did actually set out, and got as far as Calais. There I ran against an old acquaintance, who persuaded me to remain a day or two, and there, as Calais and Algiers were equally indifferent to me, I came to a halt at the commencement of my journey.

Eventually I might perhaps have gone on, if I had not taken a long walk to a charming unsophisticated little village, called Vignelles, buried in a valley close to the sea-shore. Everything was so picturesque that I immediately said to myself, "This is a thousand times better than Algiers or Calais, and here I'll stay."

I had been walking nearly all day, and was hot, tired, and dusty, and the place seemed intensely inviting. As it was nothing but a cluster of fishing-cottages, it seemed to offer but small chance of accommodation; but luckily I did succeed in making arrangements for bed and board in one of them, and the next week found me quite settled down as an amateur fisherman, in the most rustic and patriarchal little spot you ever saw.

I have seldom seen handsomer women than the fish-girls of Vignelles, with their broad, full chests and muscular limbs, bright black eyes and thick wayward hair, to say nothing of their rich brown complexions and glowing cheeks, that would have shamed many a young lady whose hands have never touched anything rougher than silk, and whose notion of work is crochet or Berlin wool.

I had spent two or three weeks at Vignelles, and was fast becoming accustomed to its rough, almost savage life, when fortunately I made acquaintance with a brother artist, who, though much older than myself, was most sympathetic in taste and feeling, and with whom I quickly became friends. Unluckily he did not live in Vignelles, but about two miles distant, in a solitary little house on the cliff, commanding, however, a view of the sea.

It was there I first saw Adèle. She was his only child, and the idol of his heart. I seem to see her now, as I saw her then for the first time. I thought her the most beautiful girl upon the face of the earth. I can't tell you the colour of her hair and eyes, for they were a mystery to me. I think her eyes must have been brown, but they often looked quite black—as black as her eyebrows and eyelashes; and as for her hair, it was all shades of gold, red, russet-brown, and black. I really do not recollect about her features, except that they were beautiful; nor how tall she was, except that I was taller; nor whether she was plump or thin, but only that she was perfect. She was perfect, too, in disposition, as amiable and unselfish as she was lovely. She was clever, too, without being

highly accomplished. She used to sing to us of an evening, in her sweet girlish voice, quaint old ditties or simple ballads; she could draw and paint, cook a little, row a boat—in fact, do almost anything. She helped her mother in the house, and yet was her father's constant companion. She was always thinking for others—never for herself, and was withal as light-hearted and blithesome as a girl of sixteen or seventeen ought to be.

She was friends with me at once, and before many days were over, it seemed to be a settled thing that the little house on the cliff was open to me—I was free to come and go as I pleased.

The days glided away very quickly. Six weeks or two months had passed, and at the end of that time I was obliged to acknowledge to myself that I had done a very foolish thing. I had fallen terribly in love with Adèle.

It was a very foolish thing, for I was poor and entirely dependent on my own exertions, and at that time my professional talents were by no means appreciated. Monsieur Berton was, I knew, far from rich, and Adèle was little more than a child. 'Till the fact remained, and I was helpless to extricate myself.

The worst of it was that she herself seemed quite unconscious of it, and by her very innocence only made matters worse. During all this time we had grown very intimate, and it seemed quite natural that we should be together nearly all day; neither Monsieur nor Madame Berton made any objection, but allowed us to walk and talk as much as we pleased. I suppose they completely trusted Adèle—as Adèle completely trusted me; indeed I very soon discovered this, partly from her manner, and partly through intuition. She would talk to me quite openly, and even confidingly, asking my advice and opinion on various subjects, and she treated me with a familiarity that showed her unsuspicion by its very openness. Of course, I treated her in the same way; I could not do otherwise. To have been formal or indifferent was impossible; to have ventured to make love to her would have seemed to me like abusing a privilege, and betraying a trust. I am very glad now to think that I never allowed myself to say anything to her, that from our intimacy was not perfectly excusable.

In the meantime the days passed on, and I grew more and more in love with her. I felt that something ought to follow. But what? Of course, the wisest thing I could have done was to go immediately away, but that was far easier said than done. The fascination was too strong for me; I could not resolve to voluntarily say good-bye to Adèle. I seemed to see her sweet face looking up sorrowfully and pleadingly into mine, and to hear her soft musical voice, as she begged me to stay, even for a little longer. "No, no," said I to myself, "I can't go—at least, not just yet." So I

stayed on, and put off the evil day, and gave myself up entirely to the pleasure of Adèle's society. How long this might have lasted, it is impossible to say, if suddenly the end had not come.

This was how it was. One morning, I went as usual to the Bertons'. I found nobody in the garden, so I pushed open the door of the house and went in. All was silent, there was no trace of any one. This was very unusual; Monsieur Berton was generally in the garden, and Madame Berton or Adèle in the little room dignified by the name of parlour. I was puzzled, and was just going to call out, when I remembered a little back room which Madame Berton sometimes used as a work-room. I looked in, and saw Adèle lying huddled up on the couch, weeping bitterly. I sprang forward, and kneeling by her, entreated her to tell me the cause of her grief. At first she only shook her head, and continued to cry; but after a time she grew calmer, and tried to speak.

"Tell me what it is," I urged; "perhaps I can help you; you may trust me, indeed you may."

"I know, I know," answered she; "you are so kind, but in this you can be no help."

"At least, tell me," repeated I—"is your father or mother ill? What is it?"

I placed myself at her side on the sofa, and stole my arm round her waist. It was an irresistible impulse, but I am glad to remember that she did not notice it, her mind seeming quite absorbed by her trouble. I could not imagine what it was, and certainly never suspected that it would so nearly affect me, so I continued to persuade her to confide in me. "Do not be afraid, Adèle; if you only knew how it grieves me to see you so unhappy! Tell me, my ——" I was going to say something much tenderer, when she stopped me by putting both her hands on my shoulders, and said—

"Dear friend, I will tell you, for I know you will pity and be sorry for me, as I should for you if you were in trouble. My poor Rudolph is very ill, dying perhaps, he prays to see me, and we have not got the money to go to him. He is in Rome, you know, a long way from here, and it would cost a great deal of money to get there. We would sell anything, I would give anything to go to him. Oh! to think that he is so far away, dying even, and I helpless here. And I would give the world to see him, to touch him, to hear his voice, only once again before he dies. It is cruel, cruel—I shall go mad. Oh, Rudolph, my dear, dear love!"

She burst into a passion of crying, and starting up, walked up and down the room, wringing her hands piteously.

I sat stupefied, as if I had been struck by a blow. This was the end of my dream; she had no brother; this Rudolph was—well, I had been an idiot.

I don't remember what I said or did after that, but I believe I muttered some sympathising words,

and then walked mechanically out of the house, and back to Vignelles. When I got there, I examined my little store of money, and deducting only what was absolutely necessary, put the rest in an envelope, and sent it to Monsieur Berton with a few lines of regret that I was suddenly obliged to return to England, and begging him to accept the money as a loan, if he would not do so as a gift, in token of my friendship and sympathy. Then I went straight away from Vignelles, without leaving any address, and from that day to this I have heard nothing more of the Bertons. I tried hard to forget Adèle, and after a time I succeeded.

But I do wonder if she is as charming now as she was then; let me see, she must be how old? Seventeen and twenty make thirty-seven; and I am forty-two. I suppose that poor fellow Rudolph died, or anyhow she could not have married him, as her name is still Berton. He might have been her cousin, you say, or some other relation of the same name? Very true; but if she is not married, and is as nice as ever, perhaps—well, anyhow, I may as well go and see her. And I did.

It may interest some people to know that she is looking over my shoulder as I write this, and that she thinks no more need be said on the subject.

K. KEMBLE.

AN IDLE HOUR.



UNDER these beeches rest,
Where breezes kiss the face;
And where the twinkling shadows flit
Among the trees, so closely knit
In linked embrace.

Lie on sweet blossoms freshly born
Since rosy day dawned: dream!—
Wild passion-dreams of youth and love;
What reck's it that they false will prove?
Dream out thy dream!

Close to this moss-laid bank,
Where sunbeams slyly climb,
Kissing the peeping buds atween
The tender green, just faintly seen
In their fair prime.

Lulled by the crooning sea
Bathing the cold cliff's feet,
Her whispered words of mystery
Will send a burning thrill through thee
Of yearnings sweet;

Of blissful days of ease,
Where laps the tideless sea
With soothing, soft monotony;
And life is full sufficiency,
Simply "to be."

Wash off in pearly dew
The smutch on hands that toil
At Mammon's forge—unbind,
About thy neck entwined,
The gnawing coil

Ambition riveted—
Fill weary heart and brain
With thoughts of pure love—wiles
Of children—woman's tender smiles,
Fraught with sweet pain.

All fancies free and wild
Let loose—freed from the grime

Of toiling, dull, prosaic life;
Forget for one hour all its strife,
Forget e'en time.

And—lying with closed eyes
And brain relaxed—drink in
At every pore fresh life and verve,
Brace up anew each flaccid nerve
Fine-drawn and thin.

Enjoy an idle hour,
Idle alike for hand and brain,
Drink to the dregs the chalice filled
With essence Nature has distilled,
With loving pain,

From bud and fruit and flower,
And all her plenteous hoard;
A draught so luscious ne'er before,
Sparkling and fresh, and bubbling o'er,
For thee was poured.

Send Reason to the wall!
She hath her share—and more—
Of all thy thoughts, in busy hours;
Let Fancy revel 'mid the flowers,
Show Care the door!

And babble like a child,
Or laughing brooklet's strain,
That at thy feet trips onward—free
To sing of sky and mead and tree,
A glad refrain.

Then, bringing back with thee
Memories without alloy,
Into the grim old city's heart
Infuse fresh vigour, and impart
A taste of joy.

A glimpse of mysteries,
A sense of things supreme,
A subtle influence shall dwell
About thee like some magic spell;
Rest! rest! and dream. A. H.



"WEAR THESE FLOWERS FOR FAVOURS."

ANGLING.



"THEY CAME TO ANGLE."

UNDER a spreading tree
They rested, he and she ;
The brooklet with a' wrangle

Complained of those rough rebois
That let its course, the pebbles ;
And they—they came to angle.

And he must clear her line,
While she a net doth twine
His fancy to entangle,
With mesh of maiden hair ;
She knows herself so fair,
She hardly needs to angle.

Maybe there comes a knot,
As comes in many a lot ;
E'en marriage bells will jangle !

Anon the line runs clear ;
He thinks, "Wert thou my dear !"
And still she sits to angle.

Ah, fools, or men or fish !
Each for the bait must wish
That doth before him dangle,
And, for they are so fain,
Too often both are slain
By one who sits to angle !

B. MONTGOMERIE RANKING.

A CAMPAIGN IN KABYLIA.

THE NARRATIVE OF A CHASSEUR D'AFRIQUE.

BY LIEUTENANT-CHATRIAN.

CHAPTER THE FIFTH

WE were compelled to fall back, and a few minutes after, about ten, fire broke out in the village ; first in the house belonging to the military garden at the foot of the fort, facing the hospital ; then in the granaries, then at the gendarmerie, and then at last every house in the place burst into flames. Waves and spires of flame broke out everywhere, and the air was alive with myriads of flying sparks. I could hear the crash of falling roofs, and the dull rumble of tumbling walls, and in the streets, over which was spreading the red light of the conflagration, were seen the miscreants who were making all this havoc, traversing the place in all directions in their white cloaks, and with torches in their hands.

The unfortunate village people, from their refuge in the fort, beheld the disappearance in smoke and ashes of what they had saved by so much labour. It was truly horrible.

A few cannon-shots were fired at those wretches ; but this was of no use. By night you can only fire at random.

That same evening the pipes leading to the public fountain were cut off ; and now we had no water but what was in the tanks.

The next day, Sunday, the 16th April, the Commandant Letellier declared the state of siege, proclaimed martial law, and regulated the posts and appointed each man his duty. We were now blockaded and cut off from all communication with the outer world.

The commandant ran up the standard of France upon the fort ; he took possession of the keys of the cisterns, and distributed rations in the following proportions :—For men a litre and a half* of water per day ; women and children, half-rations ; horses, five litres.† Half the garrison were to mount guard on the battlements, while the other half were in reserve.

The effective strength of the garrison now stood as follows :—104 mobiles from the Côte-d'Or, officered by a captain, a lieutenant, and a second lieutenant ; 57 Chasseurs d'Afrique, under the command of Lieutenant Cayatte ; 66 chasseurs on foot, commanded by Captain Truchy and Lieutenant Masso ; 50 soldiers of the first regiment of artillery, under Lieutenant Valé ; 24 artillery smiths of the tenth company, under Sergeant Eris ; then the militia of the village to the number of 40, under the command of Captain Thibaud.

The inhabitants of the European village encumbered the place, and the commandant found it no easy matter to house so many families ; separate accommodation was very scarce ; they had to be lodged everywhere, in the barracks, in the engineers' tents, and in those of the artillery and of the Arab bureau. We had besides about fifteen Arabs, who had been surprised by the insurrection, and the spahis, who were commanded by the Corporal Abd-el-Kader Soliman.

For all these people provisions and water had to be found.

Fortunately a herd of cattle belonging to a contractor of the National Fort had been obliged to fall back upon the place ; at the moment that the rising took place the herdsman had been unable to meet with any other refuge ; his herd consisted of twenty oxen. There were besides the cows and the cattle belonging to private individuals. In every possible nook and corner were these poor beasts stowed away, even in the dungeons, with such hay and straw as could be got together.

On Tuesday, the 18th April, we heard the guns of the National Fort thundering against the enemy ; the Arabs were pressing us very closely.

We had been unable to man the redan of the gate of the Arab bureau, on account of its extent ; this gate, therefore, was left to its fate. It was of solid timber for about two yards of its height ; its upper part was of strong wooden bars, and

* About two pints and a half—2 1/4 pints.

† About a gallon—8 1/2 pints.

the engineers had built behind it a dry stone wall.

The redan of the Bougie gate remained in our possession to the last, because Commandant Letellier had lost no time in constructing in front of it epaulements and intrenchments, in which the sentinels found cover.

All the guns we had to defend the place were smooth-bores : two mortars, fifteen-pounders ; three four-pounders, and two small mortars, generally called "crapauds."

The Kabyles, seeing from afar that the gate of the Arab bureau was unguarded from the outside, hoped to obtain possession of it. They immediately set to work, and the very first night, intrenching themselves in their covered ways, they had thrown up sufficient earth to attract our notice. For several nights afterwards they carried on their work with the same zeal.

On that day there was continual firing ; they discharged a plunging fire into the place. Then, finding out that they had made a mistake in setting fire to the European village before pillaging it—every night was heard the crashing of timbers, whilst they were carrying off half-burnt beams, windows, and doors, and even tiles from amongst the ruins. Sometimes they fell out about the division of the booty ; then there would follow a loud clattering of sticks amongst the disputants.

As the colonists at Tizi-Ouzou had sown all the fields around the place, with the object of applying the proceeds to the relief of the victims of the war with Prussia, barley and beans were growing in great luxuriance up to the very foot of the ramparts. These rich crops were a serious hindrance to the defence. The Arabs glided through the long grasses, and by night crept close to the walls, uttering coarse insults in French against the curé, the chères sœurs, and others, threatening to cut all our throats within four or five days, and bidding us prepare ourselves.

And what was the use then of firing into the long rank grass at the miscreants who were creeping like snakes amongst it? It would have been a waste of powder and shot.

But we might have joked over these small grievances, had it not been for the burning thirst the time for which was fast coming on. I don't know a worse pain in the world than thirst.

By the 20th of April we were already suffering considerably with our one litre and a half of water, of which one-fourth was for coffee, another fourth to drink, and the rest for soup. This was already trying enough ; when the rations were reduced to one litre per man, and three for the horses.

You can form no idea of the intense misery of this privation, both for men and for beasts.

If you had but seen our oxen wandering without a purpose here and there about the prison courts of

the Arabs, and in the fort, lowing deeply from their chests, cries which seemed to issue with difficulty from their dried-up lungs ; if you had seen them carrying their heads low, eyes starting from the head, nostrils distended and dry, and looking like dried carcases, you would have shuddered ; the meat, when they were killed, was redder than ham. And the sheep and the goats, they were to be seen swallowing the most refuse of bits of paper ! And we men—every one of us with our faces black with dirt and powder, for we had left off washing our selves—you should have seen us ! With something over our faces that felt like a mask of plastered dirt, we were objects of pity to one another.

This was suffering indeed ! and you may be sure that our sensations filled us with rage against the villains who had brought us to this condition. But they were more than a hundred to one ; others by thousands were swarming far out of the reach of our guns ; they kept every road and every pass.

All the night through, in the midst of the deep silence, we could hear something or other hammering at the smithy they had set up in the church of Tizi-Ouzou. In the morning, when they were repairing in troops to the trenches and distributing the men to their posts, Commandant Letellier never lost the opportunity of sending them a few shells ; but during the day time, whilst the burning heat of the sun beat upon the fort, all was quiet ; for those wretches had resolved to reduce us by hunger and thirst.

I am certain that Arabs and other traitors shut in with us kept our besiegers fully acquainted with all that was going on within. This became evident on the 22nd April.

On that day, a few minutes before noon, the whole garrison received notice that at noon exactly a sortie would be made to destroy the Kabyle works, which were harassing us at the gate of the Arab bureau. It was quite as well that the order was given so close upon the time for the attack, since the enemy learnt our intention almost the next moment.

They were not prepared to receive us ; they required time to call in reinforcements. This will account easily for the sudden appearance of the bearer of a flag of truce at the gate of Bougie ; he held in his hand a reed with a sheet of blue lawyer's paper at the end of it.

"Let him in," said the commandant, who guessed the trick in a moment.

He was an old grey-bearded Kabyle, acting the saint—the man of peace.

The commandant from the midst of his officers asked, "What is your business?"

The fellow replied that he had succeeded in obtaining from his fellow-countrymen, before they stormed the place, that the commandant should be invited to capitulate ; and that if he consented, the

garrison, the women and the children, should be conveyed in safety to Dellys.

"Are you in earnest?" cried the commandant. "You will see presently how we capitulate."

Then, turning to the corporal of gendarmerie, he said -

"Keep this flag of truce in sight, and we will resume our conference by-and-by."

And at once, with his sword at his side, his revolver in his hand, and his field-glass under his arm, he took the command of the troops who were standing in readiness behind the gate.

I remained with twelve men on the bastion of the Arab bureau; Ignar, with the same number, was on the engineers' bastion. The gate lay between us.

Lieutenant Cayatte and Quartermaster Brissard, with five chasseurs, remained in reserve at the sortie gate. Ignar and I, with our rifles in the embrasures, were to cover the retreat. Sergeant Erbs, with a fifteen-pounder, now and then threw a shell into the village, to prevent the Arabs from coming in that direction to the support of their friends.

The troops forming the sallying party consisted of chasseurs-à-pied, mobiles, a few artillerymen, and the militia, with spades and pickaxes to destroy the Kabyle works. A small four-pounder, worked by five gunners and a corporal, was to support the attack.

Of course the engineers had removed the dry stone wall which had been built against the gate. The gate was thrown open wide, and our men dashed out at the charge step. The Kabyles in their works were not more than thirty yards away from us.

As long as I live I shall have that spectacle before my eyes.

The soldiers yelled and shouted.

Six paces in front ran Monsieur Goujon, the interpreter. The first Arab who showed his head above the covered way he shot dead; then he leaped in, the butt-end of his rifle rapidly rising and falling.

Captain Truchy followed close upon his footsteps; then the whole body of the chasseurs, with fixed bayonets. There were shouts and howls of rage beneath us, under the battlements, and frightful curses filled the air and made us shudder.

The Arabs only stood the assault a very few minutes, and then they fell back; their wounded, after dragging themselves a few yards, dropped. This was the cause, a few days after, of a frightful infection. One of those wretches having dropped just before the redan, the corpse began to decay in the place where he fell, for neither the Arabs nor ourselves could remove it.

But to return to the sortie. In a few minutes, from the top of the battlements, we saw a cloud of Arabs coming down. In spite of the grape-shot

they came by thousands. They seemed to issue from the ground. Our volleys, every one of which tore right through the mass of them, seemed only to excite them to fury.

The commandant saw them, sounded a retreat, and in a moment our men withdrew precipitately, and the gate was closed.

The militia and artillerymen had destroyed the works of the Kabyles, and filled up their covered ways; and, therefore, the principal object of the sortie had been achieved. But all the remainder of that day and night not a man was allowed to close his eyes.

"Attention! Every man on the parapets!" had been the order of Commandant Letellier.

He was right, for we were in the middle of a ring of Kabyles, who were all beside themselves with blind rage; their standards were flying in all directions. I should never have thought it possible there could be so many Kabyles. We were expecting them every moment to open the assault; but no doubt they had orders from their officers to wait for a more favourable opportunity; and they were hoping to reduce us by thirst.

This excitement abated during the night. They had suffered great losses. Our casualties were one chasseur, unfortunately left amongst the enemy; and an old corporal in the artillery, who had received a wound in the head, of which he died in hospital. Quartermaster Martin was also severely bitten in the thumb by a Kabyle.

After that 22nd of April, the horses began to perish. To bury them seemed almost impossible; a wide and deep pit made behind the powder magazine was soon filled up. Besides the misery of the horses there was that of the cattle, which were dropping with weakness.

I can still fancy I see the old schoolmaster, Colombain, a little shrivelled old man, wrapped up in his black and greasy cape, his old battered hat lying over one ear, coming up to the canteen, followed by his cow and her calf, which never left him now. I can hear him making his doleful request -

"Ah, gentlemen officers, pray have pity on my poor cow! It is all we have got. What is to become of us—my wife, my children, and myself—without our cow? Do give us a little water, I beg of you! See how the poor beasts follow me everywhere!"

You may fancy the kind of reception we gave him. Only to hear him asking for water was enough to put us in a terrible rage; we were nearly pitching him out of the window.

This poor old man used every day to climb up the young plane-trees in the square, the leaves of which he pulled off for his cow. The Kabyles, sighting him from afar, sent bullets flying amongst the boughs, but he never cared. It was of no use

calling out to him to come down; he would not listen to us.

The courageous old man succeeded in saving the lives of both his cow and his calf. He richly deserved it.

I remember, about that time, a strange and even moving spectacle. A civil engineer, whose name I cannot at present remember, had some thirty asses inside the fort; the poor brutes had had no water for several days; their ears were hanging low; their tongues were protruding; it was a melancholy sight.

At last when they were beginning to die, and it would have been troublesome work to bury them, it was decided that it would be best to let them go loose, and trust to chance. They were all branded with a hot iron, and the engineer hoped, no doubt, that it would prove the best way to save them and get them back, if we should be rescued from our dreadful position.

I was standing just by the redan of the Bougie gate, when they were all brought in a string, to set them at liberty. They could hardly stand; and it was found very difficult to get them to understand what we were doing for their advantage; they would not move on to the glacis; and they had to be pushed on from behind, one after the other. But scarcely had they snuffed the open air of the country, when their long ears rose upright again, and they began to trot like hares in the direction of the fountain. They smelt the water at the distance of three-quarters of a mile.

Seeing them galloping off at this rate in a long string, with spirits revived, we thought we should have liked to follow them.

Since the mishap to Lieutenant Arissy, I did not forget to go and see him every day at the hospital.

It would be difficult to give you any proper conception of that little white-washed room—that filthy bed, and that almost unbearable odour. Water was wanting, and the bandages could not be washed.

There is no need to say more.

And now let me declare the truth. In the shop-windows at Paris and elsewhere, you always see pictures of the *chères sœurs* and of Monsieur le Curé seated by the bedsides of the wounded, and succouring the wounded even in the field of battle; but those we had at Tizi-Ouzou were never seen so, and remained prudently out of the reach of harm.

This is known to all the inhabitants of the fort and the whole garrison. No one will deny it.

Surely pictures might be drawn somewhat in harmony with acts. At any rate it would save us the pain of seeing folks shrugging their shoulders at such things as mere fancies.

In consequence of this complete isolation, my

brave and good lieutenant, whom I had known formerly so gay and so fond of his laugh, was in a state of complete depression. How the sight of him grieved me, and how glad he was to get a little news from the outside world!

Sometimes he boiled over with excitement and would cry—

“My dear Goguel, is it not melancholy? Here am I escaped out of Sedan; here am I, one in that famous charge in which our regiment conducted itself so nobly, only spared to come here and catch a stray bullet in bivouac after a skirmish. Ah! if it had but struck me in the heart, I should have been happy to die!”

Then his feelings would overpower him, and the tears came.

You may be sure that these things did not tend to cheerfulness, and I often said that if we ever came out of that hole, the Kabyles would have to smart for it. I pressed the handle of my sword, and thought—

“You will have a bad time of it when the charge is sounded! We will pay you off for what we have suffered through you! You’ll smart!”

On their side, the miscreants were no doubt entertaining themselves with similar reflections. Every morning I could see them with upturned faces, in their trenches, sharpening their daggers, as if they were saying—

“Make your throats ready!—here’s something for you! Your tanks must be getting empty; in a very short time you won’t care much for your meat!”

We were at that time close upon the month of May; every day it grew hotter; and in our fort, from nine in the morning till seven in the evening, when the glaring sun of Africa was flooding our white walls with dazzling light and heat, and there was neither vegetation nor shade, we almost visibly dried up. Nothing stirred; there was stillness everywhere; even our spahis, who are better able to bear thirst than we are, stayed motionless in their places, with knees drawn up, the head bowed low in a deep stupor.

The Arabs have always one consolation under every trouble. They say, “It is written;” but this mode of reconciling themselves with misfortune did not suit me, and I was resolved to die in the defence of my life.

But nevertheless, to be shut up in a place like a living cemetery, and be obliged to mount guard around it in my regular turn, without ever being able to cross swords with the enemy; to be ever dreaming of drinking, and to imagine what a pleasure it would be to draw a long draught of cool beer, and to devise to myself a succession of such illusions, and find them all a deception, this was terrible to bear.

Sometimes clouds would pass over our heads, and

then we would hopefully say to one another, "It will rain soon." But the clouds floated away amongst the olive-clad mountains, the sun came out fiercer than ever, and we were left parched and dried like fishes on the banks when the water has retired.

Sometimes we fancied we could hear a distant storm. But it turned out to be the cannon of the National Fort, or of Dellys, or of Dra-el-Mizan! The insurrection was spreading in all directions.

END OF CHAPTER THE FIFTH

THE HISTORY OF A SEA-ACORN.



FINE summer's morning, with a brilliant sun tinting the landscape around with a golden hue; the sea lying calm and placid like a huge sheet of glass before us—just such a morning as invites us to the earnest contemplation of Nature, in all her loveliness and beauty. Who can think of slumbering away this

charming morning in lazy somnolence? Let us take a stroll by the sea, and try to gain some information and instruction from the many zoological treasures with which it promises to teem.

There, in the distance, I can discern a strip of golden sand, with its long waving lines of brilliance; and between the sand and our present standpoint, a rocky plateau lies open before us.

A scramble over these low-ledged rocks will bring us to the very centre of our morning's work, and place us amid a varied collection of objects for our examination. Where and how shall we begin our labours, you inquire? And I have no difficulty in finding a reply. There, beneath our feet, as we hurry over these low rocky ledges, we may find a very convenient text for our initiatory discourse.

Examine the rock-surfaces carefully, and you will notice how they literally bristle with innumerable small conical shells. You know the little organisms perfectly well, and on every sea-beach, the rocks and stones are covered towards low-water mark with a thick incrustation of these shells. Popularly, too, you may know them as "sea-acorns," a term no doubt applied to them from a fancied resemblance to the oak-nut; and the zoologist names them, in his technical nomenclature, "balani," and includes them with the barnacles, crabs, lobsters, and a host of kindred forms, in a large class of the animal world known as the Crustacea.

If you will but take the trouble to detach a portion of rock, and carefully convey it to that pool I can discern a few yards off, you may watch at your leisure how the sea-acorn lives, and maintains itself in its own sphere. We drop our little colony into the pool—for colony it may well be called, in-

asmuch as each balanus is packed as closely to its neighbour as it possibly can be—and if the ideas of humanity be at all applicable to sea-acorns, then we might enter a protest against this seeming overcrowding which prevails in the colony before us.

Yet, as we shall see, each little inhabitant of this sphere fulfils his destiny independently of his neighbour organisms, and despite their close proximity to each other, the members of this community, by reason of their peculiar relations, have no power of aggression on the one hand, or tendency to be aggressed upon on the other.

We have dropped our little colony of balani into this pool, and now peering into the shallow depths, we watch the effect of being placed in their natural element. Swiftly and at once, from the upper and free extremity of each little shell, a curious set of branched, plume-like organs comes forth, and you notice how incessantly these miniature plumes are being protruded from, and again retracted within, the front, or, if you prefer so to call it, the upper opening of the shell.

Just watch the motions of this curious apparatus for a little, ere you demand its use and function. The series of plumes, seen in their expanded state, have a somewhat crescentic shape; the larger and longer plumes forming the upper border, whilst the shorter ones form the inner and lower border of the crescent. And in the order of expansion you notice how the smaller ones are first protruded, and then how, with a graceful sweep, as it were, the larger ones wave outwards and upwards, and complete the movement of expansion. Then immediately you see the retraction of the plumes commence. First, and quite as swiftly as they were protruded, the inner and shorter plumes are folded inwards, and then the longer ones are duly tucked in, ready for the next and rapidly succeeding movement of expansion.

And thus, backwards and forwards, with an incessant waving, in the bright clear depths of the pool, are the hundreds of little plumes, from as many little doors or windows, performing an important duty in the life-functions of the organisms of which they form so characteristic a part.

To gain a sufficient idea of the general conformation of a sea-acorn, you have only to select the largest specimen you can find, and by the aid

of an ordinary pocket-lens, you may make out the leading features of structural interest.

First, there is the curious shell in which its body is enclosed. Viewed externally, we find the acorn-shell to be conical in shape, the creature being fixed by the flattened base of the cone to the rock on which it rests. It is thus a "sessile" animal—that is, fixed directly, and without the intervention of a stalk, to the rock. Its nearly-related friend, the barnacle, on the contrary, is attached to fixed objects by a long fleshy stalk, or "peduncle," as it is technically called. The barnacle and acorn-shell are both included in the same division of the great crustacean class, and roughly speaking, the acorn-shell might be compared to a barnacle *minus* the stalk, or *vice versa*, the barnacle might be said to be an acorn-shell *plus* a stalk. *

The conical shell is composed of calcareous or limy plates, disposed in three series. The first of these sets of plates is constituted by a single flat disc of lime, which forms the floor of the box, as it were, and by which the balanus is fixed to its rocky bed. We have next a series of plates forming the walls of the shell, and these are primarily six in number; although the progress of growth has marked these six pieces in such a manner as to lead us to fancy that each plate was composed in turn of two pieces; and hence if our examination were not very carefully made, we should be apt to think that no less than twelve distinct pieces entered into the formation of the walls of this curious little cell. Lastly, we find a third set of pieces situated on the top or apex of the cone, and forming a valve-like lid, known as the "operculum," and by means of which the aperture of the shell can be closed or opened at the will of the animal.

Four calcareous pieces appear to enter into the formation of this valvular apparatus, the plates of the operculum being so arranged as to admit of the curious plume-like organs being protruded through a valvular orifice which exists between the opercular plates.

We thus notice that the shell of the sea-acorn, which at first sight you might think to be solid, or composed of one piece, in reality exhibits a structure of considerable complexity. Within this curious shell, then, we find an equally curious body contained.

Taking the crab or lobster as a typical example of the group to which the sea-acorn belongs, and seeking to reconcile to the typical crustacean structure, the disposition of parts in the balanus, we should have little difficulty in determining at the outset of our examination, that the plume-like organs of the sea-acorn correspond to the limbs of its more highly organised neighbour. In the sea-acorn we have twelve of these organs, each modified leg consisting of a primary joint, bearing two

terminal many-jointed filaments; so that, viewed externally, the sea-acorn appears to possess twenty-four plumes in its "glass-hand," as this apparatus has been termed. And so characteristic are these organs of the present group of forms, that the naturalist has termed the division which includes the sea-acorn and barnacles, the *Cirripedia*, or "cirrous-footed" crustaceans; the name "cirrus" being applied to the stiff-jointed filaments constituting the plumes of the creature. Our hand-lens will further show us that each of these filaments is fringed on either side by innumerable small hair-like bodies, the plume-like appearance being suggested by this arrangement, the function of which will be presently explained. In addition to these general details, we find a complicated little body enclosed within this curious shell.

Returning to our comparison of the sea-acorn with its typical neighbours, we find that our sea-acorn is suspended in its shell in a reversed position—its head, or, at any rate, that portion of its body corresponding to the head, being directed downwards, and towards the base of the shell, a position awkward enough as described, no doubt, but which admirably suits the particular relations of the sea-acorn's body to its abode. A complicated digestive system, consisting of a mouth provided with jaws, stomach, intestine, and liver-cells, is present; whilst a circulatory system is generally believed to exist, although the existence of a distinct heart has not yet been satisfactorily made out.

The respiratory or breathing function of the sea-acorn devolves upon the plume-like cirri, which, in their incessant waving to and fro, create currents in the water, and insure the due aëration of the blood or vital fluid, which is exposed in the vessels of the cirri to the action of the oxygen of the surrounding fluid.

The cirri have therefore a two-fold function—their first use is that of respiratory organs, whilst their second duty is that of nutritive agents, and, by means of the currents they create in the water, drawing particles of food towards the mouth. In most of the lower forms of animal life, we find this two-fold function assigned to the tentacles, cirri, and analogous organs.

Our balanus is not devoid of sensibility, or of those means whereby it maintains relations with the external world. The function of innervation or correlation, by means of which the organism, through the medium of its nervous system, determines the conditions of its existence, is subserved in the sea-acorn by a nervous axis of a highly developed type. And although, immured in its cell, the balanus, like a hermit, appears to have little or no use for the exercise of those powers which, in an active and locomotive being, constitute the chief adjunct to vitality, yet its place in the created scale, and its

life, such as it is, demand the exercise of a certain degree of correlative power. The sense of touch is present, for example, to a high degree, and resides chiefly in the cirrous plumes; while the mechanism of such a complicated body as we have seen the sea-acorn to possess, necessitates the presence of a guiding and directing power. There may be, it is true, no fit comparison or parallel between the voluntary actions of a highly organised creature, and the mere mechanical actions of the sea-acorn's plumes; yet the innervation of the latter must, in its way, be as perfect as those more highly specialised and determined actions, which result from the possession of a greater degree of nervous force and power.

Lastly, if we could trace backwards the life-history of our sea-acorn, we should bring to light some of the most interesting of its phases. Viewed from a developmental aspect, its history is exceedingly interesting, and upon the development of these and allied forms, Mr. Darwin's patient industry and observation have brought to light some very curious and most important facts. In its early state, our sea-acorn bore no resemblance to the animal as we find it in our seaside ramble, but the embryo acorn was free and locomotive, led a roving life, and was as unlike a staid, fixed, and settled-

down balanus as possibly could be. The young larva somewhat resembles a shrimp in appearance, and by means of the rudimentary legs, and other appendages with which it is provided, we find it propelling itself merrily and swiftly throughout the sea.

As you thus see it, you could readily persuade yourself that it was an abnormal crab on a roving commission; certainly, a sea-acorn would be among the least likely animals with which you would connect this free-swimming creature. This larval form possesses a rudimentary shell, analogous to that of the crab or shrimp, and in addition it is provided with large prominent eyes. Soon, however, this free-and-easy existence is to terminate, for the next stage is marked by the larva fixing itself, and by the development of the shell characteristic of the adult form. Soon, also, the prominent eyes disappear, the adult balanus being destitute of optical organs, and with the development of the cirrous plumes the change from the free-swimming embryo to the fixed adult is completed. Thus, from a popular and strictly human point of view, the creature's life in its young state would seem much to be preferred to that in its adult state; but the correctness of the views of humanity, as applied to the conditions of life in the cirripedes, may well be questioned and denied.

THE GIFTS.

RONDEL.



THESE are flowers for favours!

Wear them on thy breast—

Red roses, red roses

As bright as earth discloses,

Red roses with sweet savours

Blown in the spicy west.

These are flowers for favours,

Flowers of sweetest savours,

Wear them on thy breast!

Flowers too cold for bosoms,

Take them in thy hand—

White lilies, white lilies,

And purest daffodillies;

These lilies are the blossoms,

Thine arm the lily-wand—

Flowers too cold for bosoms,

Lily leaves and blossoms,

Take them in thy hand.

These are flowers for dreaming!

Wear them in thy hair—

Blue pansies, blue pansies

As pure as maiden fancies;

Blooms like blue eyes beaming,

For golden locks to wear—

These are flowers for dreaming,

Blue, and bright, and beaming,

Wear them in thy hair.

These are flowers thy lover

Strews beneath thy feet:

Oxlips, bluebells, daisies,

Sweets the meadow raises—

Orchids, thyme, and clover,

That trod upon scent sweet.

These are flowers thy lover,

Where thy footsteps hover,

Strews beneath thy feet.

Wear these flowers for favours,

Lady of them all—

White lilies, red roses,

Blue pansies, be thy posies;

And countless flowers give savours

Beneath thy soft foot-fall.

Wear thy flowers for favours,

Drink their sweetest savours,

Lady of them all!

ROBERT BUCHANAN.

HESTER MORLEY'S PROMISE.

BY HESBA STRETTON,

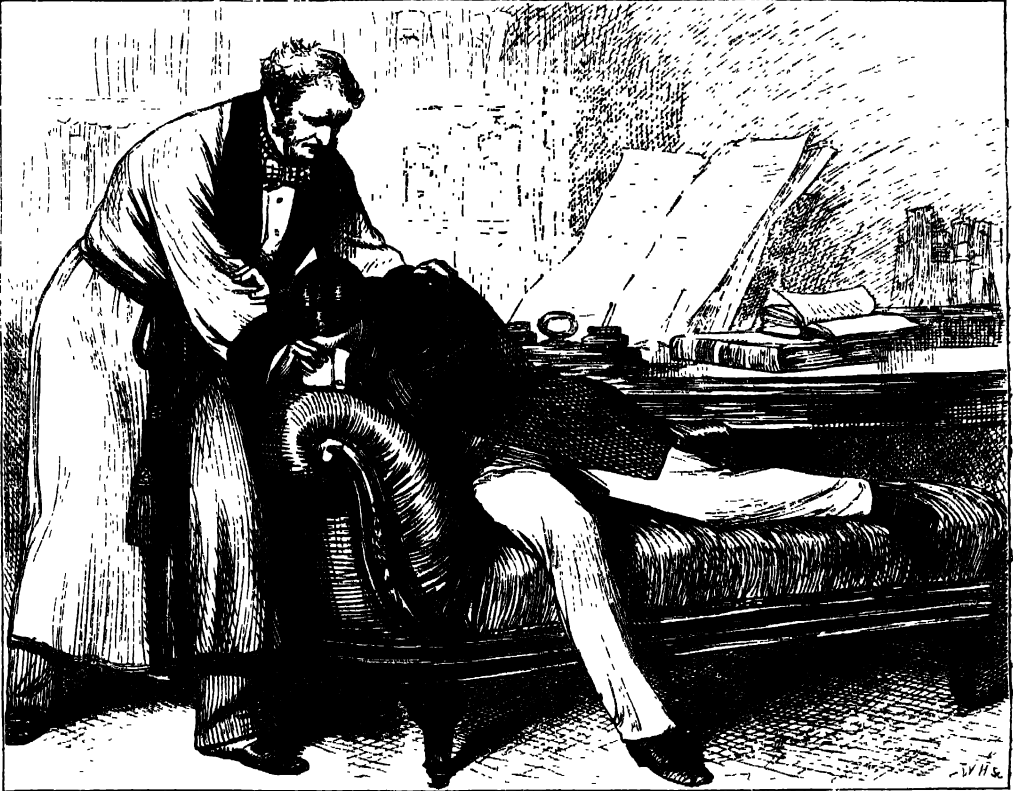
AUTHOR OF "THE DOCTOR'S DILEMMA," ETC. ETC.

CHAPTER THE THIRTY-EIGHTH.

THE OTHER TRAIN.

IT was growing late by this time, and only two night-porters were about the station. They had

Here was a new element of mystery and perplexity. Hester had gone many hours before John Morley could have wreaked his long-cherished vengeance upon Rose. Was it possible that he



'SPEAK TO ME, ROBERT!'

seen no one; had not been there during the day. Robert Waldron turned back again, disappointed and cast down. Grant wanted him to go up to his house, to tell Annie he should be away all night, and to bring his case of instruments.

He was about starting, when madame, who had been wonderfully silent, ventured to ask a question.

"Where then is monsieur?" she inquired.

"I don't know," answered Robert; "I wish to know; and where Hester is too."

"Oh! the little one is gone to London," answered madame; "she set out at mid-day. That is why I find myself here. I come to watch the house while mademoiselle is away."

had acted upon a premeditated purpose, instead of having been hurried into the crime by the impulse and frenzy of the moment? And upon what pretext could he have sent Hester on to London? If she was gone to London, Robert's jealousy assured him that she would go to Carl.

"Grant," he said, "I will start for London by the first train to-morrow."

He went at once after that to Grant's house, and returned with the articles he needed. All through the long night he watched, with Grant and madame, by the side of Rose, whose fate swung slowly from life to death, and from death to life again, as hour after hour crept sluggishly by. To Grant there was stimulus in it—the keen interest he felt in the

triumph or failure of his skill; and madame, in almost unbroken ignorance, and only with a few cunning guesses as to the truth, looked on with nearly equal excitement. But to Robert it was a night of slow martyrdom; of a crucifixion of his whole nature. His old love for Rose, his new love for Hester, his easy good-nature, his selfish repugnance to witness any suffering, his memory of the past, his dread of the future—all were compassing him about, and there was no refuge, nor any one to deliver him.

The morning came and found him a changed man. Grant looked into his face, and the tears started to his eyes. He pressed his hand hard in his own, but he could speak no word of consolation. Rose still lingered on the edge of the open grave, and might be swallowed up in it before he could reach London; but it was best that he should go. They parted in silence, and, with a heart bowed down, Robert Waldron set out on his journey.

There were two trains starting nearly at the same time, run by different companies. Robert, caring nothing by which he went, started by the first, which was detained upon the road by a trifling accident to the engine. The second took up John Morley on its route at a station farther on; and thus, by the merest accident in the world, Robert missed meeting with the man whom he was pursuing.

CHAPTER THE THIRTY-NINTH. NO CLUE.

IT was six o'clock when the train reached the London terminus; and Robert knew that Carl could only be found at his chapel. He was the only person known to Hester, and therefore it was to him that he must go for any chance of information.

He called a cab, and bade the driver drive as quickly as he could to the chapel; but the service had already begun when they arrived at it. In no mood to present himself in the midst of a congregation, Robert found his way to the vestry, and waited there in growing impatience for the conclusion of the service. The door was open, and he could hear every word uttered by Carl's clear voice, so modulated and varied that commonplace words took almost a tone of eloquence from it. He was preaching concerning temptation, and Robert's bruised spirit felt more deeply wounded by it. What did this boy, with his pure, unsullied life, his soul which had never betrayed its own ideal, know of temptation or of sin?

At length the torture was ended. Carl pronounced the last, soothing benediction, and in a minute or two afterwards entered his vestry.

On his part, when Carl's eyes fell upon Robert, he started back with a momentary disquiet and apprehension. He looked worn and ill. The

terrible scene of the past night had made him utterly regardless of those small, minute cares as to his appearance, which had invariably occupied him hitherto. He had not slept at all, and he had suffered horribly. The years, which had seemed to pass over him leaving no trace, had been graving secret lines upon his features, which now started out in strong relief, ageing him abruptly. Carl fancied, as he stood by the window with the light falling upon his head, that he could see a faint tinge of white, a shining line of silver here and there amongst his disordered hair. They had not parted as friends, and they knew each other to be rivals. Carl closed the door, and locked it against any intruder, and then waited for Robert to speak.

"Do you know anything of Hester?" asked Robert, approaching him and speaking in a low voice.

"Hester! no!" answered Carl in amazement and alarm; "what is the matter with her?"

"She came up to London yesterday," said Robert, "and I made sure you would know where she is. She had no one to go to but you. For God's sake, Carl, do not hide from me anything about her! I only ask to know that she is safe—that you are taking care of her. I will not ask to see her. I give her up to you altogether. Only remove my anxiety. Tell me that you have found some safe home for her."

"I know nothing about her," cried Carl, in anxiety equal to his own; "what do you mean? Is not Hester at home with her father?"

"They are neither of them at home," he answered. "Hester came to London by the twelve o'clock train from Little Aston, yesterday; and her father fled last night."

"Fled!" echoed Carl, his heart sinking within him.

"He has murdered Rose," continued Robert hurriedly, "and I am in pursuit of him—not to give him up. No; but to save Hester. He is mad, Carl; and what can she do with a madman? What can we do? Have you no clue at all to the motive that brought her up here? My only hope was in you."

"Stop!" he exclaimed, as a sudden light flashed across him, "she must have come to see little Hester. I wrote on Thursday to tell her about the child, and she must have made up her mind to come and see her. She is very ill."

If it had been possible for Robert's face to grow more pallid, it would have done so at these words; a stray shaft shot at random by Carl, whose thoughts were too full of Hester to remember that he had betrayed a secret which he was pledged to keep. He was in haste to be gone—to hurry to the school where the child lived, in order to make inquiries there. Neither of them knew by how small and

trifling a chance Hester had missed breaking in upon their interview.

"Where are you going?" asked Robert, as Carl opened the outer door of the vestry.

"Where?" exclaimed Carl impetuously; "to find Hester. We must find her to-night. Did you not say her father is a madman, and has murdered Rose? Find her? Can I take any rest or sleep until she is safe? Yet God has her in his safe keeping."

He said these last words with a half-sob, and raised his hand to his eyes for an instant. Then he turned towards Robert with a glance of profound and unutterable pity.

"You may come with me, if you choose," he said; "I am going to see Rose Morley's child."

Robert followed him mechanically, his head reeling and his limbs tottering. Carl saw it, and drew his arm through his own, pressing it to his side with an earnest pressure. Whatever his own anxiety and terror might be, it could not equal in anguish and intensity that of Robert Waldron.

They reached the poor, dingy house, in which his child lived; and the over-worked servant opened the door to them. They had been expecting Mr. Bramwell and the young lady for some time, she said. No, the young lady had not come back yet. She had been there all day, nursing little Miss Hester; but she had left her in the evening to go to Mr. Bramwell's chapel, promising to return as soon as she could. She had gone to the chapel, she was sure, for she had sent her own little sister to take her to the very door, where the young lady had gone in before she came away.

Carl and Robert looked at one another in mingled relief and wonder. They had traced Hester's movements up to the last half-hour; for if she had gone into the chapel, no doubt she had remained there till the end of the service. To be separated from her by no more than half an hour seemed a small thing. She would be coming in soon; perhaps she had missed her way a little. They lingered on the door-step, looking up the street, until the girl asked if they wished to see the child, who would be glad enough of a visit from Mr. Bramwell.

"Let me see her, Carl," said Robert entreatingly; "she need know nothing about me. If you have any pity for me in this hour, let me see her."

Carl hesitated for a moment; yet how could he refuse? What right had he to keep him away from her, when her mother was dead? For he had understood from Robert's hurried explanation that Rose was already dead. He answered by a silent gesture to accompany him; and both of them followed the servant to the room where the child lay.

The little girl had been raised upon her pillows, and sat with an eager face turned towards the door, listening to their approaching footsteps. Carl was the first to enter, and Robert stayed behind in the background, looking on with a new sorrow in his heart. The face—a small, refined, patrician face, which had lost the look of childhood—was that of his mother in a miniature portrait she had given to him when she was dying. He knew it well, for in his boyhood he had studied the miniature by heart. But the child was speaking, and he could not bear to lose a word she said. She belonged to him. If Rose were dead, there was no other being in the world who bore any relationship to this forlorn little creature.

"Hester has been here all day," she said; "the good, dear Hester that I'm named after. We love one another ever so! She said she'd come back with you, and stay all night with me. Why did you not bring her, Mr. Bramwell?"

"She will be here very soon," answered Carl.

"She says my mother is living with her in her house," continued Hester, in her plaintive and sweet voice; "and she knew my father, when she was a little girl like me. She loved him then, and he used to nurse her on his knees. But he never nursed me. He was dead before I was born."

"Don't think about it, my little Hester," said Carl soothingly.

"But I'm always thinking of it," she answered, "because if he hadn't died, we should all have lived together somewhere, and I should have had my holidays, like other children. They say there are worse-off little girls in the streets; but they have all got homes, and mothers and fathers; and I have nobody, no home, and no father, and no one but my mother, who is so very poor she can scarcely ever come to see me. I shan't be sorry to die, if God pleases."

"Suppose your father had not died?" said Carl.

"Oh, how I would have loved him!" she cried, clasping her small hands together; "perhaps he would have played with me sometimes. It would not have mattered then how poor we were, if we had only lived together. The other Hester said he used to be very fond of little children, and he would have been sure to have loved me the most. Hester cannot tell whether he will know I am his little girl in heaven."

Robert stood by and listened. Every word was full of heart-breaking sorrow to him; yet the calmness and tenderness of this little child soothed him. He leaned his arm against the door-post, and rested his head upon it, weeping bitterly. His child heard him, and turned eagerly again towards the door.

"There is somebody there," she said, "and they are crying. Who is it, Mr. Bramwell? Don't

leave them alone in the dark. Let them come in here."

It was no more than a step or two to her side, and Robert's failing feet trode them. He sank down beside her, as Hester had done in the morning, and hid his face in her pillow, while she laid her hand upon his head timidly, yet fondly.

"Don't cry," she said; "I'm not going to die just yet; and if I do die I shall go to heaven and have my holidays. I don't know who you are, but I don't like to see you crying for me."

"Kiss me, little Hetty," he sobbed; and she laid her lips shyly upon his cheek, while he threw his arm round her with a passionate clasp.

"Tell me," he said, "where you have been living all this time, my little girl?"

"I have been all my life long at school," she answered pensively—"ever since I can remember. I belong to nobody."

"Nobody!" echoed Robert in a voice as troubled as her own.

"Nobody, except my mother," she continued, "and she is very poor, and always full of trouble. The other Hester says she is going to take me away somewhere, and make me very, very happy. But it is too late now."

"Too late!" repeated Robert, dropping his head again upon the pillow. She lay still and exhausted, her arm resting upon his neck; and Carl did not break the silence. What could he say that would be better than this silence? It was Robert who first looked up, and spoke.

"But she does not come, Carl," he said in a tone of undiminished anxiety. Carl was waiting, straining his ears to catch the sound of her voice in the house below. The time was fast getting on, and the night was drawing near. Could she have lost herself in the streets of London? Where too was John Morley, who had been missing since this time the night before? They were compelled to leave the child, inconsolable because Hester was not come back, and start afresh upon their vague search.

They did not know where she had passed the last night, or whether she knew any one in London. There was no clue, no track. She had been near to them both only an hour or two ago, but they had not seen her. She might be close beside them still.

CHAPTER THE FORTIETH.

FATHER AND SON.

AT an early hour the next morning, Carl and Robert went again to the boarding-school, to inquire if anything had been heard of Hester. Upon receiving an answer in the negative, they did not know what further steps to take. They sent a telegram to Grant, cautiously worded: "We have had no success. Is there any change, or any news?"

The answer returned—in the name of Annie Grant, by which they became aware that she shared the secret—was, "No change here, and no news." It reached them soon after midday on Monday.

After this they visited the two railway stations at which John Morley could have arrived, and made some cautious inquiries; but they could gain no explicit information. At present they could not resolve to set a detective to seek him out. While Rose continued in so precarious a state, they dare not let any clue to the criminal slip out of their own hands.

They could not believe it possible that they had left London, for both John Morley and Hester would be as inexperienced as children with regard to any journey, or any scheme of flight. Carl hoped every hour that they would be found at his lodgings; and they returned again and again to them, to see if they had not arrived there.

On the Tuesday morning, Robert, who could no longer endure the suspense about Rose, determined to return to Little Aston, leaving Carl to continue his wary but close inquiries in London.

He reached the little town in the afternoon, and though he dare not let himself be seen knocking at John Morley's door, which would have attracted the attention of the neighbours, he could not resist going past the house.

It looked just as usual.

The closed shutters of Rose's drawing-room were still closed; but what surprised and startled him the most was to see the shop open, as if John Morley was quietly pursuing his ordinary business. He crossed over quickly, and peered in through the windows, catching a glimpse of a withered face, which glared back upon him with tigerish eyes.

The mystery was explained as soon as he reached Grant's house. Grant had resolved to keep the townspeople in the dark as long as possible, and upon Monday morning he had installed Lawson behind the counter, bidding him do his best there to meet the requirements of the few customers. It was generally reported through the town that John Morley was suffering from a second attack of brain fever, which satisfactorily accounted for his non-appearance, and for Grant's constant attendance at his house.

Rose Morley was still in danger; but there was a brighter hope now than there had been twelve hours before. It was growing more and more possible that she might rally from the shock, and partially recover; but the recovery could be only partial.

Robert went on home—to the home he had sauntered away from carelessly for an after-dinner stroll in the cool of the evening, on Saturday night.

The prodigal, whom Mr. Waldron had prepared for two years before, and who had disappointed him by his light-hearted gaiety, was going back to his father's house now, feeling that he was no more worthy. The famine had made itself felt at last, and he knew that he had nothing but husks to eat. All the wealth and the honour, the graces and luxuries of his life, hung ragged and threadbare about him. He yearned to see his father looking out for him, ready to have compassion on him, and run, and fall on his neck and kiss him. His heart was very full of repentance, and of a longing after some love which should not look for any worthiness in him. But his father was nowhere to be seen, and he avoided meeting his sister. He bade the servant tell Mr. Waldron, when he came in, that he was in the library; and then he went there, threw himself upon a sofa, and fell into a troubled sleep, full of dreams. When he opened his eyes again, his father was standing by him, with a face of painful anxiety. If Carl had been struck by the change in his aspect, his father was ten times more so. This was no longer his handsome, debonaire son; but a weary and worn man, who had been beaten somewhere in the battle of life. Robert had groaned, and his face had been sadly pained in his sleep, and he had been about to awaken him from his disturbed slumbers, just as he opened his eyes and looked up.

"Father!" he said; "father!"

"My boy, Robert," said Mr. Waldron, his hard features quivering, and his voice faltering; "what is it, my boy? Tell me everything. I am your father—an old man now; but I loved your mother with my whole heart, and I carried you in my arms when you were a baby. You may tell me. I am not hard towards you. I can hear anything from you. There is nobody loves you as your old father does. Speak to me, Robert, as a man talks with his friend."

Robert had had no very fixed purpose of concealment from Mr. Waldron, though he had told Grant that they must not let him know of John Morley's crime; and now he could constrain himself no longer. He told him all; and his father listened with a profound affection and compassion for him, which bound their hearts more closely the one to the other.

"You know everything now," he said at the end; "what is to be done?"

"I am not so fearful for Hester as you are," said Mr. Waldron; "be sure that her father will do her no harm, if he be mad; and I suppose he must be mad. Yet he was not mad when he attacked you, Robert; he was as sane as he had been for many years. If Hester was safe with him after that, she will be safe with him now."

"But where can they be hiding?" exclaimed Robert.

"We must find out," he answered. "Hester will go back to that school sooner or later, to inquire after that little child. I know her well enough for that. Be comforted, my boy. All these things will work together for good to her, if not to you. You would be content with that?"

"Content! Yes," he said; "if Hester were safe and happy, I could make myself content. Father, that little child will die!"

"No, no," exclaimed Mr. Waldron—"no, no. We will give her a fresh life, Robert. She must come here—not here with your sister; I did not mean that; but to Little Aston. Annie Grant would have her; yes, Annie would be like a mother to her; and I will give Grant a thousand pounds to make her strong again. She has your mother's face, you say? Oh, Robert! would to God I could own her as my grandchild!"

Mr. Waldron turned away and walked to the window, looking out on the terrace, and the trim lawn with its gorgeous flower-beds, where no child had ever played with the flowers. This little waif belonged to him, but he could have no pride in claiming her; yet he would make her life smooth and happy, God willing. She should know no shame or sorrow he could shield her from.

"We cannot own her," he said at last; "for the child's own sake, she must never know, and no one else must know, her relationship to us. She must come as Annie's relative; and she will be near to us, and we can care for her; but we shall always keep a distance between us, that the world may suspect nothing. I must consult with Grant and Annie about it all."

"The only Hester who will belong to me," said Robert, with a pang of passing bitterness. Yet he was comforted and strengthened by his confidence to his father.

They walked together in the evening to Grant's house, and found him at home, worn out, but triumphant. There was scarcely a doubt in his mind now that Rose would not die from the blow she had received; indirectly it might hasten her death, as her health was delicate, and her life had not been a good one before; but she would certainly recover for a time. If they could only acquaint John Morley with this fact, he might venture home again, and the affair could be hushed up with Mr. Waldron's connivance. But the mystery of John Morley's flight remained as dark as ever; and there was settling down upon it that vague feeling of a thing accomplished and done with, which is stamped upon all the events of the past.

Grant and Annie listened gladly to Mr. Waldron's proposal to receive the little Hester into their house. The only difficulty would be with regard to Rose; but they decided that she must be kept in ignorance of the near neighbourhood of her

child, until she was strong enough to bear it, and to be willing to see her only in secret, lest the suspicions of the townspeople should be awakened.

It was necessary to remove the child from school, and as soon as she could travel with safety, Grant and Annie went up to London to fetch her. But at the first glance Grant's keen eyes discovered the truth. They might bring her down to Little Aston, and warm her in the sunshine of gladness and childish joys; but the chill of death was upon her, and the warmth had come too late to save her. They carried her back with them, with the utmost care; and Robert Waldron went in to see her the day after she had been received into her new home.

"I know you again," said little Hester, receiving his kiss with quaint shyness; "you came the night the other Hester left me. She never, never came back to me. I am come here to have my holidays, and grow strong again. Do you think that I shall ever be strong enough to go back to school?"

"Not to that school," answered Robert, taking her upon his knee, and pressing her face to his.

"I never want to learn any more lessons," she whispered, "never again."

"You shall never learn any more," he promised; "but you shall have a pony to ride."

"I should be afraid of a pony," she said, stirring with joyous agitation in his arms.

"Not if I walked by you, and held you very safe," he answered; "my little girl would not be afraid then."

"I'm not your little girl," she said plaintively; "I'm nobody's little girl."

"But I love you, and you will soon love me," he answered.

"Yes," she said.

"You must love me more than anybody else, my little Hetty," said Robert, with a jealous desire to lay claim to the child's chief affection.

"Oh! I couldn't do that," she answered frankly,

"I could never do that. I love the other Hester more, and Carl. I call him Carl now, because he told me. He said Hester was the dearest name in all the world to him; and now he had lost the other Hester, I was to belong to him. I am to write to him very often, when I am well enough; and I shall begin my letters 'My dear Carl.' What ought I to call you?"

He could not answer her, and he laid her down again upon the sofa, from which he had lifted her, arranging the cushions about her carefully, and with the most gentle hands. He came every day to see her, and so did Mr. Waldron, whose heart opened to her with the doting fondness of a grandfather. Very smooth and very soft was the path her little feet were treading, but it tended downward to the grave; though for some weeks no one knew it except Grant, who would not mar the slight consolation that came to Robert in this close attendance upon his little daughter.

One day, when the summer was finest, Robert took her down to Little Aston, and the child's languid feet walked up and down the grassy length of the terrace with him. Mr. Waldron came up, and took her away from him to show her the aviary; and he heard his name called by his sister's authoritative voice.

"Who is that child, Robert?" she inquired.

"You don't know?" he said in an accent of incredulity.

"No; how should I?" she asked; "but her face reminds me of some one. Who did you say she was?"

"Rose Morley's child," he answered in a hoarse whisper.

"Rose Morley's child!" she exclaimed; "but I never knew she had any child. I am sure nobody ever mentioned it to me. Wherever has she been all this time?"

"Sister," murmured Robert, "the child is mine."

END OF CHAPTER THE FORTIETH.

MY FIRST DAY AT CHAMOUNIX.

IN TWO PARTS.—PART THE FIRST.



N Longfellow's "Hyperion," Paul Fleming is made to speak of Chamounix as the "great marvel," and, no matter how extensive one's acquaintance with the rest of Switzerland may be, the "great marvel" it still remains. The stamp of royalty is on many a mountain brow throughout this wonderful land, but at Chamounix we are in the presence of majesty itself. The monarch of all Europe here

looks down upon us from his superb throne, as calm and grand, as conscious of supreme power, as an old-world emperor.

The first time I visited it was in company with a travelling companion with whom I had fraternised on my way from England. We started from Geneva by the diligence which leaves at midday, having been unable to secure places in the one which starts early in the morning. We found, however, that this was not a matter for regret, for unquestionably the finest view of Mont Blanc which can be obtained is from the point where the valley

opens near Sallanches, and at this point we arrived at an hour when the whole mountain was bathed in the golden glow of a cloudless sunset, its "silent pinnacles of aged snow" soaring into the clear blue sky, with indescribable beauty and sublimity, while the dark pines of Mont Forclaz, which lay beneath, seemed like the barrier of death between the lower world and the eternal fields above.

At the time I speak of, the new diligence road was not completed beyond the village of Chède, where, after partaking of a modest table d'hôte, we took our places in the little mountain chais drawn by two mules, in which we were to perform the rest of the journey to Chamounix. When I reflect on what was in store for me, I cannot regret that the whole of the latter part of our journey was performed in almost total darkness. It was reserved for me to see the full glory of the Valley of Chamounix under an effect which must always stand out in my memory as the most impressive scene I ever witnessed in my life.

As we neared our destination we could dimly discern the huge forms of the mountains on either side, and the ghostly shapes of the glaciers stretching mysterious arms down to the silent valley; but the darkness was so intense that had we not known of their existence, we should not have understood the nature of the weird forms by which we were surrounded.

Suddenly, far up to the right, I observed an effect which appeared like mountain forms sketched in an outline of luminous silver against the midnight sky. That magical artist, the Moon, was rising on the other side of the range, and was just beginning to touch the edges of the pinnacles with her ivory pencil. It was a foretaste of what was to follow a few hours later.

We secured rooms at the Hôtel d'Angleterre, where the room formerly occupied by poor Albert Smith is still pointed out. Our rooms, we found, faced Mont Blanc, a circumstance which afforded us an opportunity of observing the monarch in all his moods. I found it difficult to realise the fact that I was at length absolutely at the foot of the mountain which I had all my life longed so ardently to see; whose wonders had so impressed me when a boy that I had written an imaginary ascent—with details surreptitiously filched from books of mountain adventure—at the tender age of thirteen. I could not realise it until I went to the window of my room and looked again at that luminous silver outline. The moon was still low, however, and all below the summit, so softly revealed, was a deep, impenetrable gloom, so intense that it seemed to approach quite close, and almost touch the eye.

I went to bed reluctantly, and in a fever of anxious anticipation which was not destined to remain long unsatisfied. According to my usual

custom when exploring any new scenes, I had drawn aside all the blinds, and happening to awake at about three in the morning, I found my room flooded with a moonlight which almost rivalled the light of day. The instant after I was at the window, and throwing it open, I saw for the first time the snows of Mont Blanc, distinct and white in the splendid moonlight, rising in unspeakable majesty far into the deep blue heavens.

I can never forget the sensations of that moment. It is no figure of speech to say they held me breathless. There was an intense and solemn stillness in those spotless slopes of snow, lying so far above our vexed world, so far removed from all sounds of life that I could only stand and gaze in silent worship.

The air around was filled with the ceaseless, monotonous murmurs of the Arve, as it hurried on its course beneath the walls of the hotel—its waters, white with the débris from the glacier, looking still whiter in the moonlight. Below me was the sleeping village; just across the quadrangle beneath, a solitary light gleamed from the house of a guide, who was possibly already astir, preparing for some mountain climb; the roofs beyond shone brightly in the moonbeams, but between them and the distant snow-fields was still that impenetrable gloom of the night before. I could perceive now, however, that this was caused by the dark pine forests which clothe the foot of the mountain, though even the brilliant moonlight failed to reveal any details in these dark masses; but this only added to the lustre of the snows above, upon whose undulations the moon threw an absolute track, as it does upon a rippled sea.

The keen night air, fresh from the glaciers, warned me not to remain long at the window, though it was difficult to drag myself away. I recalled Dr. Scoresby's description of his sensations when looking at the moon through Lord Ross's telescope. "There was a fascination about it," he said, "which rendered it next to impossible to withdraw your eye, in spite of the knowledge that numbers of others were waiting to take their turn." Here, however, I had it all to myself, though the fascination was strong upon me, as it always is when gazing at a snowy peak. No matter how attractive the rival points of the scene may be, the mountains still assert their majesty, and exact entire homage.

Before five o'clock I was again at the window, just as the first rosy tint of sunrise touched the summit of the mountain. Soon the Dôme du Gouté glowed with the same lovely light, then the Aiguille du Gouté, then the whole of the upper snows above the dark rocks of the "Grands Mulets." And now the gloom of the lower slopes resolved itself into definite forms of wonder and beauty.

The multitudinous pines stretched like an in-

vading army far up the huge slopes of the mountain, even to the jagged edges of the glacier. Here and there an *aiguille* pierced the luminous air with its sharpened point of bare rock ten thousand feet above the valley, while down through the pine forests, appearing—with the deceptiveness of this magical spot—like pathways easy to climb, stretched innumerable dry water-courses, varied here and there by a veritable mountain torrent. These latter, at the distance at which I stood, seemed like tiny silver threads, which waved and glistened in the morning light.

The incessant sound of the Arve—fainter in the daylight—still filled the valley, and a soft spray rose from its rapid eddies as it sped away in its rocky channel. Cattle dotted the flat pastures around, and the mellow tinkle of their bells came softly to the ear through the loud murmurs of the river, like the notes of a sweet songstress through the tones of an instrument. A thin line of mist—a “lucid veil”—was drawn across the lower valley, softening the view of the Glacier des Boissons where it touched the green pastures with its icy foot, and above all, the cloudless sky overhung the wonders of mountain and plain, “like the protecting hand of God inverted above them.”

On the terrace of the hotel, and at the angle of the little street to the right, guides were already busy preparing for their various excursions. Here, too, were a score or so of mules, those for distant journeys, such as the Tête Noire or Col de Balme, laden with packages of all descriptions, which were strapped on behind the saddle with an ingenuity peculiar to Swiss guides. Tourists now began to emerge in considerable numbers, their hats bedight with green veils and every variety of puggaree, as a protection against the fierce sunbeams which flood these valleys in summer time. Chars were also in preparation for the return journey to Geneva, and although it was scarcely yet six o'clock, the whole village was a scene of life and activity.

My travelling companion was up and dressed as soon as myself, and we proceeded to lay in a good foundation for the labours of the day in the shape of a substantial breakfast. The windows of the *salle-à-manger* looked out upon the Glacier des Bois, which is the lower portion of the Mer-de-Glace.

This extremely tempting sight would soon have determined our first excursion, had we been undecided, but we had already formed our plans. Our intended route was to the Montanvert, thence over the Mer-de-Glace to the Chapeau, and back by the foot of the glacier—which is generally the first and always the most popular excursion from Chamounix.

Having dispatched our breakfast, we sought the terrace of the hotel, and, by the aid of the telescope fixed thereon, traced the whole route to the summit

of Mont Blanc, the track being visible with but few intervals from the valley to the highest point. The ascent commences through the pine forest across the fields to the left of the hotel. It zig-zags upwards for several thousand feet, to a little hotel near the edge of the Glacier des Boissons, whence the route lies across the glacier to the rocks of the Grands Mulets, which stand out clear and black against the surrounding whiteness. From this point the track is plainly visible in the upper snows, winding round and over the slopes and precipices up to the Grand Plateau, beyond which it is lost for a certain distance behind some projecting masses, but reappears on the smooth slope of the white dome-like summit.

We were to do our day's work on foot, as there was nothing before us which could not be accomplished by a tolerably good walker of either sex. At a little shop at the corner of the street we secured our alpenstocks, which cost us a franc apiece, and proved to be quite as serviceable for ordinary mountain rambles as the more expensive kinds.

It was a strange sensation, that start up the valley for my first mountain climb. The brightness of the scene, the fresh pure air, and the novelty of the situation raised my spirits to the highest possible pitch, and I felt like a boy in lightness of heart and joyous anticipations.

For half a mile we followed the path up the flat meadows on the other side of the river, then diverged to the right, where the ascent to the pine wood commences. Here some chubby children, with their brown healthy faces, and little tight caps drawn closely under the chin, emerged from a *châlet* to give us a morning greeting, and to get in return any chance coppers we chose to bestow upon them.

Just beyond the *châlet* we entered the pine wood, and commenced the ascent of the zig-zag path which leads, after a climb of two hours, to the hotel on the Montanvert.

There is a wondrous charm about these illimitable forests of pine, which for miles and miles clothe the huge buttresses of the Alps. The charm is intensified at early morning, when a delicious fragrance steals up from innumerable wild flowers in the various openings among the trees, and from the green moss which clothes with such velvet softness the rocks lying half hidden in the rich verdure. Variegated lichens enrich with the colours of the kaleidoscope these rocks and river-stumps; wild strawberries peep out with their pretty pink eyes from the shady grass, and if we chance to look upward from the wealth of beauty below through the rifts in the dark foliage overhead, some pinnacle of snow is seen soaring into the deep blue sky, as soft and white and still as the wing of a sleeping swan.

A CAMPAIGN IN KABYLIA.
THE NARRATIVE OF A CHASSEUR D'AFRIQUE.



"OH, GOGUEL! WHAT A FOOL YOU MUST BE!"

BY ERCKMANN-CHATRIAN.

CHAPTER THE SIXTH

I AM not altogether ashamed to confess that, in those awful times, I often wished myself back again at St. Dié, in the Vosges, shaded by the tall fir-trees, lying on the banks of a cool running stream;

and that at night time, with my cloak wrapped round my head, in some corner, when I was off duty, I many a time called myself a consummate fool to have come and thrust myself into this hornets' nest at Tizi-Ouzou, whilst so many others, who had re-

mained at home, deaf to the calls of the Provisional Government, were enjoying their regular three meals a day, washed down with good wine, and quietly smoking their pipes at the public-house in the evening, shuffling their cards, and talking over the news of the day. Ah! how often did I say to myself—

"Oh, Goguel! what a fool you must be to have enlisted without a moment's reflection, whilst so many thousands of lads richer than you, and with more to defend, have never stirred from home! Those fellows will become mayors, they will be members of the Conseil Général, deputies for the department; they will be married to pretty girls, who might very likely have given the preference to you, if you had been there; and here are you, in this awful mess, perishing with thirst; with a prospect before you of having your head carried about from one village to another, stuck on the end of a pole! Poor, poor Goguel! if you had but shown a little common sense at the right moment! Of course, if *everybody* had been compelled to serve, well, you would only have been doing your duty when you marched away from your comfortable home; but as things are, I must confess you are a fool!"

Such were my melancholy reflections.

It moved my indignation to see that the Kabyles, instead of attacking us, wanted to catch us alive like rats in a trap.

At last the patience of these creatures came to an end. They thought us at the last extremity, when one evening the clouds, which had been so long coming and going, gathered in masses over the fort, the lightnings began to play, and we had an abundant downfall.

What a delightful event both for men and cattle! Now we had water in plenty—and we enjoyed it as we had never enjoyed water before. The rain came down from every roof, and the cisterns were more than half full. The Arabs burst out into a furious rage.

"Ah! French dogs," they yelled from their covered ways, "it is lucky for you that Allah has thought of you! You have had five or six days added to your lives; but you will have lost nothing by waiting!"

Soon we saw them trooping away in gangs to the neighbouring villages, whence they brought back timbers, planks, bundles of sticks. All this material was piled up behind a mound, facing the gate of the Arab bureau; and the garrison came to the conclusion that they had decided upon a final assault, that they would dash in at the first signal, each man with a faggot on his shoulder, which they would pile up at the foot of the wall, to the height of the rampart, when we should meet them hand to hand.

We were prepared to give them a warm reception.

The attack was expected that night. I was with

the reserves at the Arab bureau. The moon was shining brilliantly. Our stables lay close to that bureau; the ridge of the roof was leaning against the wall of the fort; and within the court its edge rested upon posts, like a cartshed. Underneath, the horses and mules stood in rows, and inside the back wall, pierced with loopholes, stood our spahis with arms ready, watching the open country.

I had orders to prevent the least interchange of words between our men and the enemy; for the Kabyles in their trenches were not many yards from us.

So I walked backwards and forwards, smoking my cigarette, listening and observing.

At the stroke of midnight, I woke Corporal Péron, who mounted guard in his turn; then, enveloped in my full white cloak, I lay down at full length behind the horses, upon a bundle of straw, under the shelter of the roof, and fell into a sound sleep.

How long I slept I cannot tell, nor what the time was when, from my sleeping-place, I saw between the horses' feet an immense hole in the wall, just beneath the manger.

"Aha!" said I, thinking in a moment of the Kabyles, "this is the way they mean to come in!"

And immediately a black-bearded Kabyle's face appeared through the hole; the eyes were gleaming fiercely, like a tiger's about to pounce on his victim. I shuddered; horror overcame me, and seemed to petrify me. The man held in his hand a long yataghan, and was creeping up in the direction where I lay. Then I saw another, then a third, then more and more.

I struggled to rise, I made terrible efforts to cry for help, to call the men to arms. It was impossible! A heavy weight upon my chest bore me down each time that I rose.

The first Kabyle has reached me. He glares upon me in the dark shadow with cruel eyes; his arm is lifted high, the yataghan plunges down, and I feel the deadly wound with which I am pierced through the body; I feel the hot blood bubbling from the wound! Then I am able to shout—

"Comrades, to the rescue!"

The sentinel, much surprised, turns round and asks—

"What is the matter with you, quartermaster?"

I answer, with both hands upon my hot and saturated chest—

"I am wounded! I am losing blood fast!"

But, strange to say, there was unbroken silence everywhere. I rose upon my feet, and what did I see by the clear moonshine? My white cloak stained and discoloured from head to foot. I had just had a nightmare; and all my alarm I found was caused by a spahi, who had passed by me in haste to carry a pot of hot coffee to a thirsty comrade, and stumbling over a stone, had fallen himself,

and discharged its whole contents over me! This was the story of my supposing myself to be covered with blood!

This was great fun for all our comrades next day, when I gave them an account of my dream. All the garrison enjoyed a hearty laugh, and a good laugh was of rare occurrence in these days; it was a momentary relief to our misery.

Unfortunately, the expected assault never took place. The Kabyles, far from meditating an attack by storm, had built up barracks with their timber, to watch us more at their ease. Several men had been killed on the ramparts; seventeen horses had died of thirst; of the cattle only a fourth were left; the water in the cisterns had again sunk low; the well at the end of the lightning-conductor had several times been examined for water in vain; help was hoped for—expected—and none came!

We might easily have fought our way out sword in hand, and with fixed bayonets; but the women and children could not have followed us, and Commandant Letellier was not the man to leave them behind. Besides, not a man amongst us would have encouraged such a thought; we would have died to the last man, sooner than be guilty of such cowardice—I will do our men that justice.

We therefore hoped now only in the column which we were expecting to come to our relief.

On the 11th of May, being on guard at the powder-magazine bastion, as I was crossing the *place* about noon, to get my dinner, passing by the wagons of M.M. Monte of Algiers, who had put them into the fort for safety, and turning round before entering the canteen, I observed an immense column of smoke or dust slowly rolling through the air in the far distance.

"What is that?" I asked of one of the drivers.

"That, quartermaster, is the caravan *serai* of Azil-Zamoun on fire."

I went in, supposing that he was right.

But in the evening, after having relieved my sentinels, just as I was about to lie on my camp-bed to enjoy a sleep, the distant booming of a gun made me lift up my head in haste. I listened breathlessly. A second faint report reached the fort, and I exclaimed—

"If I hear a third, it is the signal, and we are saved!"

And then came the third report; but so faint in the distance, that without specially directing the attention to it, it might have escaped notice.

I could have wished to announce the good news to my comrades; but being on duty, I was unable to quit my post.

The whole of that night, the Kabyles kept up an incessant shouting and firing, no doubt to prevent us from hearing or seeing any further signals.

But at four o'clock the old corporal, Abd-el-

Kader, appeared, and said to me, with hand outstretched towards the gate of the Arab bureau—

"There are no more Kabyles that way, quartermaster; they are all gone to the Bougie gate."

I could scarcely believe it: but presently I saw a company of the Mobiles from the Côte-d'Or moving rapidly out from the ramparts, and setting to work to cut corn for the cattle; then, near the marshal's camp, at the angle of the road, a long line of clouds of dust, giving unmistakable notice of a column on the march.

Immediately the news spread that the siege was raised, and that we were relieved! You may imagine, if you can, the joyous excitement of unhappy wretches so long shut up, as they broke out to assure themselves of the fact with their own eyes.

Two hours afterwards we saw the little village of Vin Blanc in flames; then a French officer, riding in at full speed upon a horse covered with foam, to announce to us the arrival of the column of General Lallemant, composed of eight thousand men, ten field guns, and two mitrailleuses.

How could I describe to you the enthusiasm of our men, the loud cries in all directions of "Vive la France! Vive la République!"

The Kabyles retired in haste to the mountains; they concentrated at the Arab village, near the Marabout Dubelloi.

A poor gun-driver ran to the ramparts to enjoy the happy sight. I can still see him running up, his face beaming with delight, and leaning over an embrasure, when suddenly he fell back and dropped, his head streaming with blood. The last ball shot by the Kabyles sped for him. They carried him away and buried him.

"Come away! come away!" cried Lieutenant Cayatte, "we have no time to lose. Bridle your horses, and take them out to water."

But how were we to put their bridles on? They could scarcely open their cracked and chapped mouths. However, we got on their backs and started.

I had caught up a piece of soap; and just as we arrived at the Turkish fountain, the head of the column was beginning to debouch past it; General Lallemant, seeing the condition we were in, and our haste to reach the water, could not help smiling. Without actually seeing it, you can form no idea of the pleasure of washing, and dipping, and soaping, and rubbing down with sweet, clear, cool water. The whole column was filing past us; presently came past our own regiment. Our regiment! That is a pleasure you don't know, because you have never served. The regiment, I tell you, is the soldier's family; the regiment is everything to him!

The little shakos, under their white sun-covers, the sky-blue jackets, the full, red, flapping trousers, the broad white shoulder-belts, advanced with measured tramp through clouds of dust; the

merry jingling of swords, the neighing of horses once again cheered our listening ears ; we gazed our fill.

Suddenly a voice cried, "Goguel !" And my old comrade, Rellin, threw himself from his horse ; other non-commissioned officers followed him. The hearty, vigorous grips that were then exchanged, it still does my heart good to think of them, so great was our joy at meeting again.

But the column marched on ; our friends were obliged to remount, and set off at the trot to resume their places in the ranks.

And as for us, with shirt-sleeves rolled up, soap in hand, we went on with our great wash. Then, after a most complete lathering and rub-down, we returned to Tizi-Ouzou, leading our horses by the bridle.

Everything was prospering in our direction, except that at twenty-six kilomètres (sixteen miles) from us, on the heights, the National Fort remained closely blockaded. The Kabyles, strongly intrenched all round it, had cut the road at twenty places, and intercepted the supplies ; it was difficult to approach it. During the interval, until they could be driven away, General Lallemand gave orders to rid the neighbourhood of the presence of the enemy ; and as we were returning to the fort, a battalion was just on the point of starting, with arms sloped, to capture the Arab village.

But the resistance was more serious than we had expected. The Kabyles, enraged to see that we were escaping from them, fought with the courage of despair. A second battalion had to be sent, then a regiment ; then the whole column was engaged.

At the first cannon-shot, I had ascended the rampart of the old fort, which commanded the whole position. Hundreds of Kabyles, sheltered in the houses of the village, and behind the immense cactus hedges, were keeping up a continuous fire from all sides—from the midst of the orange-trees, the mulberries, and the sycamores—the white smoke of their incessant discharges rose in dense clouds.

Our artillery soon replied from the European village, hacking all that beautiful greenery like chopped straw, and our skirmishers were dashing in upon them at the charge step. Many of the lanes and by-streets were already choked with the dead and wounded.

The struggle was a long and hard one ; but about nightfall the Kabyles, broken along their whole line, commenced their retreat. Their long brown legs might be seen traversing the country with great strides, and climbing up the Marabout Dubelloi, in order to gain the more distant heights. Now and then a random shot lighted the darkness far away amongst the olive-trees ; then silence fell on

all, and the flames made the village their prey, lapping round the great old trees, already disfigured by the shot, and whose dark shadows were trembling on the plain.

This over, Lallemand's column stayed two days at Tizi-Ouzou. They reconstructed the fountain, laying down the pipes afresh ; they provisioned the place, and took their leave of us on the morning of the third day, leaving with us a company of infantry, a rifled gun, and a mitrailleuse. The column marched northward, in the direction of the sea, and fought the next day the bloody engagement of Taourga, the result of which was the dispersion of the insurgents, and the raising of the blockade of Dellys.

In another week the column had returned to Temda, and received the submission of the Beni-Raten. It was thither that our little detachment, escorting a convoy of bread, went to rejoin it. The commandant, Letellier, was at our head. On the road we saw Si-kou-Médour, now completely deserted, the Sebaon, whose stony bed we followed once more, and the hill upon which we had given battle forty days before.

At last, about eight o'clock in the morning, we reached Temda. The column lay encamped there.

I spent a few hours with my comrades. We took a turn round the village, and I remember seeing a lot of Turcos in a lane plundering some bee-hives that they had found. They were covered with bees, and were laughing like lunatics without minding the stings of the irritated insects, having, no doubt, some way of their own of protecting themselves against their effects. They were not afraid even to bite the combs through with their teeth, and were so obliging as to offer us some.

On that day they blew up the house of Caïd Ali, and set fire to Temda. About four o'clock in the evening, the column had packed up bag and baggage, and was descending to the Sebaon to encamp further up the mountain country. We resumed the road to Tizi-Ouzou, and about five we were passing through Si-kou-Médour, whose inhabitants had joined the insurgents.

The heat was stifling. Everything was quiet in this disorderly collection of gourbis, huts, and hovels, where hundreds of storks had taken up their abode ; every old roof carried two or three huge nests full of young, whose long necks thrown back, and great wide-open bills, seemed ever on the look-out for food. The mother-birds came by dozens from the valley of Sebaon, bringing them snakes, toads, and frogs. Even the trees were so loaded with these nests that they looked like haystacks.

Beneath, in the narrow lanes between the dense hedges, ran large numbers of poultry, which the Arabs had not had time to carry off with the cattle.

These were the only inhabitants of Si-kou-Médour.

As we approached the village, the commandant gave orders to set fire to the place, which was very soon done by a score of chasseurs. From the nearest roof, a handful of thatch was pulled out, which they lighted with a match, and this served for a torch. In a quarter of an hour the whole place was blazing, and in that hot, still air, the flames soon united into a vast spire; then the black volumes of smoke rose straight into the sky.

I saw then a sight both sad and terrible; the storks, those birds of the fens, attracted by the cries of their young, hovered a while in the midst of the black smoke, then falling headlong into the furnace, dropped dead upon their broods.

We started off at the quick-step; but how many times I turned round, gazing upon this heartrending spectacle, and remembering our own sufferings in France; our cities ravaged with fire, our land devastated, our relatives shot down by the Prussians!

An hour after we re-entered Tizi-Ouzou, and for many days after, we could hear the distant roar of artillery amongst the hills, and could see the villages burning right and left.

About the 1st of June, Lallemant's column returned to camp near us; the general found that he was not in sufficient force to raise the blockade of the National Fort; but General Cérés' column, from six to seven thousand strong, was on its way from Aumale; and efforts were being made to effect a junction of the two armies before commencing the attack.

On the evening of the 5th of June, having been to shake hands with my friend Babelon, a lieutenant in the First Regiment of Algerine Tirailleurs, he informed me that on the following night the column would raise the camp, and would reach the foot of the Maatka by daybreak, and pass over its highest ridge to join the column of General Cérés.

Accordingly, Lallemant's column left us the next morning, leaving at Tizi-Ouzou a handful of cavalry, a company of infantry, two field-pieces, and two mitrailleuses. On the same morning, the 6th of June, this small detachment also started, directing its course by the mule-road to Dra-el-Mizan, towards the mountain on which lies the village of

Bounoum. The Kabyles, under the belief that we were on our way to attack them in that quarter, descended the hill in dense masses to encounter us, and Lallemant's column, which was some distance further on, profiting by the diversion, made straight for the ridge of the Maatka without meeting any resistance.

By eleven o'clock in the morning all was over, the detachment returned to the fort, and that same evening we saw the fires of the two columns lighting up the mountain-tops; the junction had been effected.

From that moment until the 15th of June, every day the deep roll of the artillery was heard behind the Maatka; but it seems that they were unable to get to the National Fort from that point; for the united columns of Cérés and Lallemant returned to Tizi-Ouzou. We feared they were dispirited, when one night the whole of the infantry started off, leaving the cavalry behind on the plain; they reached the foot of the Beni-Raten about four in the morning, near the mill of St. Pierre, and the assault of those immense heights which are crowned by the National Fort commenced immediately.

From our ramparts we could distinguish our men climbing through the olive-trees and the shrubs, dragging their artillery after them. The whole body were advancing and firing at the same time. The guns were placed in battery on every available shelf, and thundered in their turn; the Kabyles offered a courageous but ineffectual resistance. The din of our twenty guns awoke the loudest echoes amongst the peaks and crags of the Beni-Raten. The long, tremendous, incessant roar was both grand and terrific.

In the midst of the hottest of the action, a sortie was made from the National Fort; and the Kabyles, attacked in front and rear, at length abandoned their position: they scattered themselves in all directions, and the blockade was raised. At half-past three the two columns were encamping under its walls.

As we were now extricated, I might stop at this point, but I must tell you the end of this history; for what remains belongs not to war only, but to the internal affairs of this beautiful, rich, but unhappy land.

END OF CHAPTER THE SIXTH.

MY FIRST DAY AT CHAMOUNIX.

IN TWO PARTS.—PART THE SECOND.

HALF-WAY up the ascent, at a little chalet beneath the pines, a merry Swiss maid tempts us to partake of milk and strawberries, or deliciously cool water with a dash of so-called cognac, of which latter,

however, beware! By-and-by we cross a bare open space, stretching on the mountain slope as far as we can see, both above and below. It is the track of an avalanche, which has swept everything clean away, as with the sweep of a mighty scythe. Trees

are broken short off at the base, others uprooted, bare, and withered. Huge rocks are overturned and hurled into the valley like playthings, and through the wreck and devastation the rich herbage struggles into life again, obedient to the call of the summer sun. Through these vast aisles the sound of cattle bells, mellowed by distance, steals upwards from the far valley, whose rivers, fields, and chalets are dwarfed to mere miniatures, and lie like a map beneath.

For two hours we continued the ascent, passing now and then strings of riderless mules returning from the summit in charge of boys. These have already conveyed their riders to the Mer-de-Glace, and are now going round by the foot of the glacier to meet them on the other side, below the Chapeau. Pausing to rest for a few minutes, we see also other strings of mules labouring up the path. Ladies, a few fat clergymen, some evident invalids, and unexcitable indolent men, are their riders, and with these we exchange morning greetings, and possibly a little quiet "chaff" on our respective modes of locomotion. Pedestrians, as a rule, look upon mule-riders with considerable contempt; while the latter, under certain circumstances, evidently entertain doubts touching the sanity of the former.

Presently, in an opening of the wood before us, we see something which brings us to a dead stop. "Voilà la Mer-de-Glace!" exclaims my friend, airing his limited French.

There it was, jagged and bright and blue, just where it falls with a sudden drop to the valley. Beyond it the Aiguille du Dru sent up its sharp peak 11,000 feet into the crisp air, and below were the fearful slopes down which such numberless avalanches thunder, to die in silence on the glacier. Here we paused to take breath, and to enjoy the novel and wonderful sight, then pushed on again, and in another quarter of an hour reached the hotel on Montanvert.

This hotel, a small stone structure, called the Pavillon, is situated on a ledge or shoulder of the mountain at the highest point reached by the mule-path. The mountain itself continues to ascend to the right for several thousand feet, terminating at last in the Aiguille de Charmoz. From the green slope beside the hotel a glorious view is obtained of the Mer-de-Glace, which lies a few hundred feet below, and is accessible by a rugged pathway cut in the almost perpendicular mountain slope.

Let us sit down on this sunny slope of green-sward, upon which the sun pours its beams at a temperature of over 90°, and gaze upon the vast expanse of ice below. Over the whole surface the intense heat is forming little rivulets, which glisten and circle in small pools and tiny cascades among the chinks and crevasses. In the far distance the enormous mass softens into the upper glaciers, where they trend towards Mont Blanc on one hand,

and towards the Jardin and the Aiguille Verte on the other. As the eye follows it in its course down the valley, how jagged, wild, and beautiful are the multitudinous ice pinnacles and intervening crevasses, from whose yawning depths the ice shines up as blue and bright as the treacherous eye of a siren!

Who shall speculate on the depth of that enormous mass?—a vast valley overflowing with pure ice, which, in its downward course, grinds its granite bed to so impalpable a powder that it thickens the waters of the swift Arve even fifty miles away, and dulls the sapphire hue of the arrowy Rhone, where it breaks away from the placid waters of Lake Lemman.

We climbed the grassy slope for a few hundred feet above the hotel, to get a still clearer view of the sea of ice, and then made a hasty descent to the glacier. We were half dead with the heat; but the moment we had crossed the dusty moraine, and stood upon the ice itself, a delicious coolness came upon us like a refreshing breeze. Tourists were flocking across literally by dozens, for at this point the glacier loses its jagged character, and consists of icy undulations which I can best describe by comparing them to a frozen ground swell. Difficulty in crossing there is none; a child might almost run over alone. The only crevasses that need be crossed are but a few yards in depth, though there are of course many deeper ones in the immediate vicinity, the inspection of which will well repay one for a slight détour. Here and there, on the opposite side, a small ridge of ice has to be traversed, and there is some rough climbing along the broken pathway which crosses the moraine on the eastern side, but nothing to stir the most delicate nerves.

Our pathway now lay downward along a high ridge of the moraine, which was here a huge heap of rubble, interspersed with rocks of some magnitude. After about a mile of this, still following the course of the glacier, we came upon a mountain torrent, rushing down from the heights above to the glacier below at an angle of about forty-five degrees. Over this a ladder was placed, with a single plank upon it, wet with spray, for which questionable causeway we were nevertheless thankful, and gladly bestowed a few sous on the youthful proprietor. Still another ten minutes of the rough pathway, and then we suddenly found ourselves on the Mauvais Pas, which is considered the *bête noire* of this excursion; the dangers, however, are quite imaginary.

It consists of a huge bluff of rock which projects somewhat from the mountain slope, and cuts the pathway almost perpendicularly, dropping suddenly to the glacier. Along its side small steps are hewn in the irregularities of the rock, and, for the benefit of the novice in mountain climbing,

slight iron rods, fixed in staples driven into the rock, extend for the greater part of the distance, and afford a safe hold in the more difficult points of the passage.

A few yards beyond, is the Chapeau, a projecting mass of rock, near which is a small *châlet* for refreshments. Here was assembled a noisy, heterogeneous throng of tourists, of both sexes and all nations, laughing and talking at the top of their voices, and shouting for wine, beer, cognac, cheese, cutlets, steaks, potatoes, and what not, all of which commodities the luckless *garçon*, who was never allowed a moment's pause, produced with the most laudable celerity.

Here also we encountered some fellow-travellers of the day before, made new acquaintances, and plunged off-hand into friendly chats with people we had never seen before in our lives. People become communistic with regard to ideas in Switzerland. Every one meets upon common ground. The mountains—so regal in themselves—are terrible levellers of rank in their worshippers. The most confirmed dandy could hardly give himself airs in the presence of Mont Blanc or the Matterhorn, and the enjoyment of scenes so sublime is a common bond of union between those who would not deign to notice each other in the crowded ways at home.

Having discussed a cutlet and a bottle of Macon, we continued our way down a precipitous path which led to the foot of the *Glacier des Bois*. Part of the way lay through a pretty wood of oaks, strewn with mossy boulders, and part over the vast accumulation of stones and rubble which skirts the lower glacier. In due course we reached the level of the valley, where the foot of the glacier rests upon its pebbly bed—worn white and bare by the winter torrents—and the *Arveiron* flows from an ice-cave in the lowest point of the glacier.

It is a strange sight—this river—rushing out full-grown at the moment of its birth, from the mysterious cavern whence it gathers life and motion. Imperceptibly it drains the life from the great glacier, and even from the rocks themselves, and bears its double burthen to the distant sea, where, in the lapse of countless ages, another upheaval will probably produce more gigantic mountain forms, and the eternal processes of nature will repeat themselves for another era, and possibly for another race.

It would be unsafe to enter the ice-cavern, even if the watercourse were dry, for ominous masses of ice, half detached, hang from above like a frowning portcullis at the gate of an enchanted castle. To the left, however, is an artificial cave cut in the solid bed of the glacier, which we are invited to enter on payment of half a franc. The man in charge bids us beware of the dropping fire of stones which, detached by the heat of the afternoon sun

from the ice-slopes above, slide downward with unpleasant frequency and startling rapidity over the entrance to the cave. We are obliged to "bide our time," and then, in obedience to the quick "*Allez !*" of the guide, make a sudden rush for the interior.

These ice-caves, artificial though they be, are extremely beautiful—perfect tunnels, several yards in length, cut in the solid blue ice—so blue, that the daylight gleaming on the rounded irregularities of the surface near the entrance appears, by contrast with the light which penetrates *through* the ice, like the glow of a yellow sunset.

Inside there is not a crack or chink to mar the exquisite surface, the icy walls being rounded and polished by the partial thaw consequent on the warm air which penetrates from without. All is blue, bright, and glistening, and the change of temperature so sudden that one dare not indulge too long in the icy luxury.

A little *châlet* close at hand tempts us with its shady benches. Here we can get a refreshing glass of beer from the hands of the amusing host, who speaks most excellent English, although he has never been out of the Swiss valleys. He gives us plenty of information concerning the locality, and directs our attention to the *châlet* at the Chapeau, which appears at this distance no larger than a tiny nest perched upon the mountain-side, above the jagged ridge of the *Mer-de-Glace*.

We are still feeling full of life and vigour, and half resolve to ascend the *Flegère*, on the other side of the valley; but the day is waning, and we think it will be an attraction for another morning excursion; so we saunter slowly down the valley, and loiter under the trees, and sit upon mossy stumps, and watch the *Arveiron* flowing beneath the slope of pines, or let the eye soar away to the far pinnacle of the *Aiguille du Dru*, around whose rosy spire light clouds—the first we have seen to-day—pause and circle slowly, as if in infinite wonder at this strange intruder into their own boundless aerial realm.

As we turn our faces towards Chamounix, Mont Blanc again rises before us, flushed with the sunset light.

When we reached the hotel, and stood leaning from the terrace, in the half-hour still to spare before dinner, the sun dropped, and the light upon the summit went out. It was as if a face, instinct with life and health, were suddenly struck with death, and we gazed on the face of a corpse.

A few hours later, as I looked from my chamber-window, the moon was again shining full and bright, and the mountains once more reflected the midnight lustre, as with the purification of a new life.

So ended my first day at Chamounix.

SYDNEY HODGES.

HESTER MORLEY'S PROMISE.

BY HESBA STRETTON,

AUTHOR OF "THE DOCTOR'S DILEMMA," ETC. ETC.

CHAPTER THE FORTY-FIRST.

MISS WALDRON'S TEARS.

MISS WALDRON gazed into her brother's face with an expression of bewilderment; then a faint and tardy blush tinged her cheek, and her eyelids fell. She began instantly to wonder what would be the most befitting course for her to adopt.

"Robert," she said sternly, "your sin has indeed found you out! I hope you feel how vile a sinner you are! But I will act the part of a sister—a Christian sister—and take charge of that child of sin and shame, and see to her welfare for time and eternity—on condition, however, that you give her up to me entirely, and never see her again."

Miss Waldron ceased with an air of self-commendation. She expected her brother to acknowledge her generosity thankfully; but he did not answer her immediately, and when he did, it was in broken and faltering sentences.

"I should like her to be happy," he said; "I wish her to be good. I want her to learn about God after a different fashion to my own learning. She must be with some one as merciful and tender as Christ was upon the earth."

"And I?" gasped Miss Waldron.

"You are not that," he said, "you are nothing like that. God knows how utterly selfish my life has been; but not more than yours, not more in crimes than yours in its good deeds. I don't believe you love anybody besides yourself. You know it. Whom have you loved? No; I could not give the care of the child to you."

Miss Waldron stared at him with stony eyes. It had never happened to her to have her piety questioned; she had never questioned it herself. And here was her unregenerate brother hinting with bare effrontery that she was not the favourite daughter of Heaven.

"If any one is near to the very heart of Christ," continued Robert, "it is Hester. She is not for ever brooding over her own soul; but she cares for others, she loves others. It is when I think she might have loved me, that I feel my sin has indeed found me out."

Miss Waldron would listen to him and his profane words no longer. She retired with unbending dignity to her room, where she locked herself in before giving way to her emotions. The only relief she could think of was to pour them out into the sympathising heart of David Scott, whose deafness was such as to make writing the easiest mode of communicating the infinite varieties and minute

shades of her inner life. The tears flowed down upon her paper, and impeded her progress; but she did not lay aside her pen until she had written sixteen pages, worthy of being published in her memoirs, when her life should be written for the benefit of unborn generations.

By-and-by some inkling of the truth began to ooze out in Little Aston. Nobody suspected the existence of Rose, who was half-living, half-dying in the house, tended by the old Frenchwoman with singular fidelity; but it became generally believed that instead of John Morley being ill with fever, neither he nor Hester was dwelling in their own house. The sagacity of Little Aston was at no loss to account for their absence. It had been long known that John Morley was deeply involved in debt, and, without doubt, he was in hiding somewhere from his creditors. As soon as this report gained universal credence, Mr. Waldron came forward as the principal creditor, holding a mortgage upon the house, and undertook to satisfy all other claims, on condition that everything was left to him. He closed up the shop, put the place into the joint guardianship of Lawson's mother and the poor woman to whom, it was well known, Hester had given a shelter in the outbuildings; and there, as far as the townspeople were concerned, the matter rested.

There were some points in the life inside the house which struck Grant as peculiar. He could hold very little conversation with madame; and he could not altogether account for her extraordinary and faithful attendance upon Rose all through the crisis of her illness, and during the longer and more tedious weeks of her convalescence. Madame could never be persuaded to leave her charge, and when she consented to take her necessary sleep, she would only lie down on a bed she extemporised upon the floor in one corner of the room. She insisted, with urgency, upon having chains placed upon the doors, even those inside the dwelling; yet when Grant proposed that Lawson should take up his quarters there, she shrugged her shoulders and shook her head in vehement dissent. When Rose was able to speak, and to speak fluently to her in her own language, it was easier to understand madame's attachment to her; and in the course of a short time Grant's perplexity passed out of his mind.

It was some weeks before Rose seemed to awake to anything like consciousness of her own state and

circumstances ; and afterwards she passed most of her time in a lethargic stupor. Possibly the blow she had suffered had in some manner injured her brain ; but now and then her mind appeared to rouse itself from its torpor, with the keener vigilance and activity from its long slumber. She could give no information with regard to the evening when she was hurt, beyond saying that she had heard no sound and seen no one approach her before being struck by the stealthy blow, and that she instantly lost all consciousness. She appeared willing to lie

gradual and partial recovery of her mind, she began to grow restless and unquiet, an excitement which Grant dreaded for her. It was Carl she wanted, she said, day after day, whenever she roused herself to take any notice of him ; and after some delay Grant sent for Carl.

For Carl, Hester's disappearance was the chief and most absorbing circumstance of all that had occurred in this concealed drama of life at Little Aston. He put numberless advertisements in the daily papers, so worded that if they met her eye



SHE RETIRED WITH UNBENDING DIGNITY."

still in her listless debility, without asking any questions concerning her husband, in whose house she knew herself to be ; and whenever she inquired after Hester, she was easily pacified with an evasive answer.

This mental languor, with its rare intervals of activity, lasted until she was well enough to leave her bed and sit up in Hester's little study. There was no need for her now to return to the old nursery. She saw no one but Grant and Lawson's mother. Mr. Waldron bade Grant feel no hesitation in supplying her with any luxury which could soften her hard lot ; but Rose was indifferent to those luxuries, which had once seemed to her feeble and self-indulgent nature the chief good. In the

she could not fail to understand them, and be touched by their anxiety and distress. He reproached himself with bitterness that he had not confessed his love to her, and if she loved him, that he had not bound her to himself by a delicate and light yoke of duty which her conscience would have acknowledged. If she had been betrothed to him, his promised wife, she would, above all, have owned the allegiance and fealty of affection due to him.

But he had left her free, or rather, knowing Hester as he did, he had made it impossible for her to fly to him, while he was yet dumb and gave no voice to his love for her. He could not believe that she and her father had left London ; and every

woman's figure at all resembling Hester's stirred every fibre of his heart. He would see it afar off, hurry to get level with it, cast his eyes upon the face with a wild and forlorn hope, and then turn away, or pass on with an indescribable heart-sinking.

As day after day wore away, and week after week, bringing no news of Hester, he grew terrified, exasperated at the long suspense. A mournful, almost reckless disposition took possession of him.

His co-pastor, a man who had found his way into the tranquillity and serenity of old age, and his church, very busy with its own cares, said he was overtaking and irritating his brain; and when Grant's summons came for him to go down to Little Aston, his deacons advised him to take a holiday of two or three weeks.

It was three months now since John Morley had taken his flight from Little Aston, and no trace had been discovered of him. Carl entered the town with a feeling of despair, and like Robert Waldron, went first to walk past the house before going up to Grant's home. It was dismal, silent; like a grave, only more empty than a grave. A mystery hung about it, and made it blacker than it was before.

He saw Lawson, looking smaller, more shrivelled, more palsied, prowling about the pavement, and looking up at the closed windows as if seeking some mode of entrance. He called to him, in the subdued voice of one who fears to disturb a quiet place, and Lawson came close up to him, gazing with his keen but sunken eyes into his face.

"Do you know everything?" he asked.

"Everything," answered Carl. "Where can Hester be, Lawson?"

"You love her?" he said sharply.

"As I love my own soul!" exclaimed Carl passionately. "I would save her from sorrow as I would save myself from sin."

"I know nothing about them," said Lawson in a tone of surly and dogged temper; "but it's my notion that Robert Waldron knows. He's the devil."

He turned quickly round, and went as swiftly as his tottering limbs would carry him up the street, while Carl walked sadly away towards his sister's house.

His arrival had been anticipated all the day, for his sister and the child Hester had thought and talked of nothing else. Annie had put the finishing touches to his room with her own hands; and Hester had been carried there by Grant, to place upon the dressing-table a pincushion on which she had marked with pins the word "Carl."

The poor little thing had to be carried up and down stairs now; and the pony, which had occasionally borne her quietly along the lanes and

across Aston Court Park, had not been mounted for some days past, though it was brought to the door every morning that she might look at it with her pensive and gentle smile. Yet the chill shadow of her formal and unnatural life was passing away, and her smile was gayer, and her weak laughter more ready.

She was sitting restfully on Robert Waldron's knee, with her head lying upon his shoulder, when Carl entered, and with a shrill yet feeble cry of delight, she stretched out both her arms to him.

"You love Carl best still," said Robert mournfully, when she was transferred to his arms, and was looking up into his face with eyes of vivid and childish joy.

"He knew me first," said the child, "long and long before you knew me. I couldn't help loving him best.—Have you found the other Hester yet, Carl?"

"Not yet," he answered, kissing the child's quivering mouth.

"I should like you to find her before I die," she said, with a long-drawn sigh of anxiety. "You won't be so sorry for me if you have her."

"There is no clue to them yet," said Robert in a hopeless tone.

"I have a fancy," answered Carl, "that if I could see Hester's home again, some intimation might come to me—some inspiration, I may as well call it—to lead me to where she may be found. It is nothing but a superstition, but it is there in my mind."

"I will go with you to-morrow," said Robert.

Carl looked up steadily at him with an expression of surprise and inquiry. He did not know whether he had ever seen Rose since the time when he and Grant had been summoned by madame to her aid. Before the child, who was listening with eager curiosity, he could ask no question. Little Hester turned her earnest face also towards Robert.

"Is the other Hester's home near here?" she asked of him.

"Yes," he said.

"Then you know her?" she continued.

Robert nodded, for his only reply.

"And you never spoke of her to me," she went on reproachfully, "not when I told you all about her. You never said you knew her. I told you that she said my poor mother was gone to live with her, and you never said it was somewhere near here. It was not kind to me. I might have seen my mother. Oh, Carl, take me with you to-morrow to see my mother."

She was too weak to cry aloud, but the silent tears ran down her cheeks, and she sobbed quietly to herself as she hid her face against Carl's breast. Robert could endure his own pain no longer. The

child's preference for Carl—his own child—stung him to the quick ; yet he controlled all token of his natural jealousy. He kissed the small thin palm which hung listlessly down by Hester's side, and pressed Carl's hand warmly. Then with a great grief and hunger in his heart he went out into the night, and walked home slowly through deep darkness.

CHAPTER THE FORTY-SECOND.

AN INSPIRATION.

'CARL and Robert went down to John Morley's house with Grant, when he called to see Rose the next morning. While he prepared her gently for the excitement of seeing Carl, the latter accompanied Robert through every other part of the house.

Madame was with them, and availed herself of the opportunity to give her tongue play.

Her son, she told them, had had an access of his malady since last night, and had taken an unusually strong dose of opium, the effects of which had not worked off.

Lawson's attic was unoccupied, and there was now no trace of work in it. Hester's seat was still in its place in the broad dormer window ; but it was covered with dust, as was also the binding press. A press-pin lay in one corner, as if it had been flung there hastily ; it was rusty, but when Carl stooped to pick it up, a singular revulsion, possible to a sensitive temperament like his, caused him to shrink from touching it. His face was white when he turned away, and he hastened to quit the workroom. Down-stairs the old French-woman had cleaned and put everything into a cold desolate order, altogether unlike the warm living displacement and disarrangement of a house which has inmates.

Carl stood and looked about him with a chill sense of disquiet and disappointment. He felt that he should gain no hint of Hester from these rooms, empty, swept, and garnished. It had been a superstition—one of those superstitions which are apt to follow closely in the track of a passionate love ; and though he half-laughed at himself, he gave it up with reluctance.

By the time they had gone through all the deserted rooms, Rose was ready to receive Carl. He found her calm almost to apathy, until, as if she suddenly recollected why she had wished to see him, she began to speak about her child. Then Carl, who had been warned by Grant to avert from her as far as possible any extreme agitation, judged it to be best to tell her the whole truth at once.

"She is here, in Little Aston," he said in a tone of singular sweetness, which soothed her feverish disquietude ; "my sister Annie has charge of her, and I am come from her this morning to you. If

you will only control yourself, there is no reason why she should not come here to see you."

"At Little Aston!" murmured Rose ; "here, close to me ! Oh, how good you are ! My little Hetty ! I hunger and thirst to see her. Sometimes I am not quite sure which little Hetty it is. Are you sure, quite sure, that I have been a very sinful woman, and that I am not a silly giddy girl like I used to be ? Which am I, Carl ?"

He was silent, looking at her with grave, pitiful eyes ; and Rose turned her face away from him.

"I know," she said with a sigh ; "yet I think the sinful woman is nearer to God than the giddy girl was. Will you let Hetty come to me to-day ?"

"She shall certainly come," answered Carl gently ; "but I must tell you something about her. The world would be very cold and cruel for your little girl."

"Oh ! I know," she cried ; "my darling ! my poor darling ! And it is I who have done it ! And I can do nothing to take away that shame. Oh, what shall I do ? Carl, is there any help for a wrong like this ?"

"Yes," he said ; "God can repair this wrong. He is about to do it. But there is only one way by which a wrong like this can be set right. The world would be too cold and cruel for her, and he is about to take her out of the world."

"She is going to die !" said Rose quietly, closing her weary eyes, and leaning back against the pillows which supported her. She lay quite still and silent for some minutes, and a few tears stole slowly down her cheeks. Then she spoke again eagerly.

"She must come here at once, my poor little darling !" she said. "Nobody could tend her and love her as I will. She is my own, Carl. See, I will have the little bed Hester used to sleep in put up in the drawing-room. It is a large room, and the sun shines upon it most of the day. It used to be such a pleasant room ! I am quite strong enough to nurse my own child, though I am going to die too, not very long hence. Oh, how good God is ! How he puts things right ! And you are good to me, too, dear Carl. What should I have done without you ? What would have become of me and my poor little Hetty ? Oh, Carl ! Carl ! how very good you are to me !"

She broke into vehement sobs, though she tried to smile ; while she caressed his hand with her own, and would have raised it to her lips.

"Hush !" said Carl ; "hush ! you must not excite yourself. Hester shall come."

"The poor child !" said Rose softly to herself. "Oh ! nobody knows what her life has been. I am glad she is going home to God ! Why, I only saw her twice till she was six years old ! and since then I could count the days she has been with me. That is not like other children, who are always

with their mother ; and nobody can love a child as its own mother does. My love ! my darling ! I wonder if she is much altered. She was always very small and delicate, and she never had any childish ways about her ; but how could she, living always in a school with strangers ? Shall I be strong enough to nurse her on my lap, Carl ? Will Mr. Grant only let me have her sometimes just for a minute on my own lap ? If you will let me lean on your arm, I could show you at once how nice the drawing-room would be for her."

She spoke so urgently that Carl did not know how to refuse her. He raised her from her chair, and put his arm round her to support her ; her new deep joy lending her strength. The drawing-room, like the rest of the house, had been put to rights ; and, except the faded colour of the furniture, there remained no traces of the dust accumulated during the many years it had been closed. The shutters towards the street were not opened, but the window looking upon the little garden admitted the autumn sunshine freely. Rose directed her feeble steps towards it.

"Here," she said, "the bed shall stand, where it is bright and pleasant ; and the room is large ; she can walk about in it well, when she is too ill to go out of doors. Oh, Carl ! you don't know how proud and happy I was when I was getting this room ready !"

She spoke in an accent of such poignant anguish, that Carl could scarcely keep back his tears. But this memory of the past was gone from her in an instant ; and all at once remembering that there would be much to do to prepare the place for her child to die in, she hurried him away, telling him that he must bring her little Hester there before the night closed.

Robert was waiting for him in John Morley's parlour, still in conversation with Madame Lawson, who seemed unable to part with milord Waldron. She arrested them even at the door, to give utterance to a last speech, which Carl could not understand.

"Be of good heart, milord," she said, "the little one will come back. Ah ! how I miss her. She could speak French like a Frenchwoman. She was so sweet, so gentle, so sage ! Like a little angel of the good God. There is nobody to talk to me now of Burgundy, and my little town Ecquemenville. She would talk to me for hours of monsieur the curé, and monsieur the doctor, and my friend the widow Leinct. She knew the place like what you call a map ; for I built it for her one day with books—a big book for the church, and the town-hall, and the house of the mayor, and little books for the smaller houses. Here was the place, and there the market, and yonder the fountain. Oh ! the little one knew it very well. She knew all our patois, milord, as if she had been born there. I

used to call her my little daughter of Burgundy, and I said to her each day, 'Go, go, my cherished one, my angel ; the sun shines there as it shines never in this bad country.' But I have no one to talk to me of Burgundy now."

Robert started, and turned to look at Carl, who was waiting impatiently to get away, and whose careworn face remained blank. The inspiration had come, but not to Carl. It was to Robert that the old Frenchwoman's words gave a clue which appeared likely to lead him to the discovery of the fugitives. If Hester and John Morley had really left England, a conclusion which had become almost a positive certainty to him, what place would they be more likely to choose for concealment than this distant, unknown, yet to Hester familiar town in Burgundy ? If they had been in London, or even in Paris, argued Robert, they could not have failed to see the English papers ; and if Carl's numerous advertisements had escaped them, they must have known from the absence of all news concerning any murder at Little Aston, that in some way or other John Morley's crime had missed the ordinary results.

He could come to no other conclusion than that they had fled to some region beyond the circulation of any news from England ; and the small insignificant town of Ecquemenville would be precisely such a place. It was there Hester would be found.

This little town, hidden among the vineyards of Burgundy, busy with its own small interests, with no frequent communication with the rest of the world, and quickly adopting a stranger into its own narrow circle—Hester must be there. The old selfishness—a selfishness which he had been victoriously trampling under his feet for the last three months—rose up again strong and mighty. He would find Hester himself, saying nothing to Carl of this new faint hope. Hester should owe to him all the help and consolation she could receive in her peculiar position of desolation and distress.

At Grant's door he stopped, declining to go in ; for already his heart burned with a passionate desire to be upon the road, at the end of which he expected to find Hester. There was not even a vague hope within him that he should ever win her. He knew that upon the path he had to travel through life there was a point where the cross stood, upon which must be sacrificed his lost love, his lost hope. But he could not relinquish the sweetness of finding Hester himself alone ; it might be the last sweetness and joy he should taste in all his intercourse with her. His love for her, deepened and purified by all these later sorrows, must never seek satisfaction—except the satisfaction to which he had always been a stranger, that of surrendering itself, and consenting to be sacrificed to the happiness of the beloved one. But it was coming gradually to this in Robert's spirit ; and

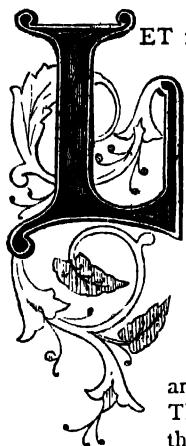
with set face and heart he travelled towards the threatening cross, only asking to gather one little flower at its foot.

"I am going away for a day or two, Carl," he said, pressing his hand convulsively; "I shall be back soon. Take care of my little Hetty. She will not miss me now you are here."

He hurried home and wrote a short note to his father, saying that he was going away upon business, for he did not wish to subject himself to any questioning; and with very little other preparation he set out by the first train on his journey to Burgundy.

END OF CHAPTER THE FORTY-SECOND.

A FEW MORE HOURS WITH A PORTER.



LET me give you a little more of my day's experience, taking up the hours where I left off in my last.

A lady arrives and wishes to book for Pocklington. In vain do we (the booking clerk and I) try to make her understand that she will be as soon by the four o'clock, and that she will only have to wait two hours at a dreary junction; she is determined, and goes. We afterwards heard that she went to sleep, and was considerably over-carried. The train is just about to start when the Duke of — drives up, and

asks the station-master to put a slip carriage on for a small station at which the train does not stop.

The station-master complies, though the result is to keep the train three minutes, and the driver, who has got steam fairly up, growls at his grace in a very audible manner. At length it starts, and almost at the same minute the inwards bell commences again, announcing the arrival of the day mail.

I am called by a gentleman in a first-class carriage, who puts his rug out of window and says, "Engage a hansom for me." "All right, sir." I engage it and put his rug in as a mark of my engagement. "You'll find my luggage, two portmanteaus and a hat-box marked S. O." I cannot find this luggage, owing to its being in quite another van to what it should be, and on returning to the passenger to tell him so, I find he has engaged a fresh porter, and that porter a fresh cab. There is a dispute between the cabmen, and of course the first one has to be paid a shilling for the hiring, which the gentleman does, and threatens to report me for my stupidity, as he calls it.

In the course of my searching the carriages, I come across an old lady fast asleep. I wake her up: "London, ma'am." "London? why, I ought to have got out at Sibthorpe; what shall I do?" "Oh, see the station-master by all means;" and I conduct her to him, and leave her giving him the whole rigmarole.

As we are in a hurry to clear this train away to make room for the next arrival, we begin to unload the horses that have arrived in their boxes, before the passengers have quite cleared away. The animals are frisky and impatient after their long confinement, and one of them creates quite a panic by breaking away and galloping down the platform at full speed, and eventually coming to grief over some milk cans, the contents of which are entirely lost.

A woman comes up and asks me what is the next train for Matton. "Seven o'clock;" and as I am sure that I have seen her asking before, I follow her, out of curiosity, to see how many people she will ask; and she questions no less than four different porters, and winds up by inquiring at the booking office.

With some other porters I attend the hall, and a passenger booking for Lawley at the last minute gives me a shilling, and bidding me pay his cab, rushes off to the train, which starts before I can find the cabby. When I do find him and offer him the shilling, he scoffs and demands another sixpence. In vain do I tell him that the gentleman is gone, he says he must have another sixpence, and desires to be shown to the station-master. I take him and leave him to settle it there, and I am afterwards reprimanded by my superior for taking the money. I should have been reprimanded just the same if I had not, and so I don't take much notice of the circumstance.

I am now sent bill-sticking till 4.30, when I come and meet the express due in at that time. While waiting on the platform, I am asked by an elderly country-looking man if the coming train is from Solby. I tell him yes, and as the train is coming into the station I see a female leaning her body half out of window of a third-class carriage, and on seeing the elderly man, say to some one inside the carriage, "There's feyther—feyther!" The old man advancing to the carriage, she clasps him round the neck, and had not a porter pulled him bodily away from the still moving train, he would have fallen a sacrifice to filial affection.

"Porter," cries a lady, "put my luggage on a cab." "Yes, ma'am;" but in doing so I happen to shake a hamper rather hardly, and a prolonged howl

from the inside announces the fact of a dog being concealed there; and this coming to the ears of the excess man, he charges for the dog, at which the lady protests but pays. Several of us porters are engaged to put up an immense quantity of luggage arriving by this train for some nobleman; it weighs nearly seven tons, and after we have put it up, his lordship's butler gives us half-a-crown to divide between us, and goes away; but his master, happening to come up, says to one of the men, "It must be a very heavy job, I never saw half a sovereign better earned" (between twelve of us). "I beg your lordship's pardon, he only gave us two and sixpence." "Is that all? Why, he told me half-a-sovereign; here is one—I'll see to this;" and he did too, for the next time he travelled, we noticed he had a new butler.

I go round to the hall and wait for the five o'clock passengers; nor had I long to wait, for a man came up and wished to book for Collingworth, and after booking said he would carry his rug himself, bade me put his other luggage into the van, and walked into the refreshment room. A lady, attended by two children, booked for Darcot; she did not seem to have the slightest control over them, and as it was at the last minute, was requested to make haste, instead of which the children set to fighting and scrambling, on the platform, for a packet of sweets, and were lifted by two porters into the train, which was started—and then only to find that the gentleman for Collingworth had been left behind, as he had got into an empty carriage standing behind the train. Tea time has arrived, and so I am off duty for an hour, and on returning take duty for the hall policeman, while he has his tea. "Which is the train for Cudby?" "Through the first door on the right." "There's no train there." "No, and as the train doesn't start for three hours, there isn't likely to be." "What are the parcel rates to Kilby?" "One shilling, ma'am." "Dear me! as much as that?" "It's over two hundred miles, ma'am." "Is it?" "Where do I change for Filby?" "At Lurtle and Poleworth." "Not at Graham?" "No." "Why, Bradshaw shows it." "We don't go by Bradshaw, we go by our own time tables." "What's the cab fare from Camberwell?" "Three shillings." "He wants three shillings and fourpence." "Perhaps you've got two boxes outside." "Oh, yes, that makes the fourpence—thanks."

These and similar inquiries keep me going till the proper man returns, when I go over to the arrival side and meet the slow train from Cudby; it is very heavy to-night—twenty-five passenger coaches, three milk vans, four horse boxes, and a carriage truck.

"Porter, my little boy put his head out of the window while we were in the last tunnel, and his cap blew off; do you think you can find it?" "We'll try; if you leave your name and address we'll

forward it." "Can't you try now?" "No, ma'am, we never search the tunnel by day; the trains are much less frequent at night, and there's less danger of being run over." "Porter, I left two umbrellas and my walking stick in the carriage, and I can't find them now;" I hurry up and just catch the searcher marching them off to the lost property office; I take them of him and give them to the owner.

The passengers having all gone, we commence unloading the milk, etc., and very heavy work it is too. At last the train is clear; she is taken to sheds, and I go to the hall and attend the mail out. One of the first arrivals is a lad who wants to go to Walford, and goes to the train; but he has scarcely taken his seat when a man asks me if I have seen a lad, giving me a description, and as the description tallies with the appearance of the lad, I tell him that he has booked and is in the train. He goes up, and after a slight scuffle gets him out of the carriage, and then informs the bystanders that he has run away from a good home, enters into detail, and goes in for the King Lear business in good earnest.

A soldier wanting to go to Kitley has not sufficient money by two shillings and eightpence, and as he is coming back to-morrow, wishes to know if I will advance it upon his accoutrements; but this I will not do, as it is illegal to detain anything belonging to the army. A lad of quite fourteen to look at, a really big lad, comes up and asks if I think that they will grant him a half-ticket to Blanton. I say, "I should think not." "What shall I have to do if I haven't got money enough?" he asks of the clerk. "Walk" is that gentleman's reply, and he does walk, but only outside the station, where he commences to cry and speedily attracts a crowd, one of whom brings him in to point out the inhuman clerk who told him to walk fourteen miles, and on the lad's doing so threatens to report him, and makes a collection there and then, sufficient to take the lad home.

A passenger comfortably seated in a first-class carriage calls me: "Porter, a foot-warmer—is my luggage in?—fetch me a glass of sherry;" and after executing these various commissions he puts his hand in his pocket and gives me a penny, which I immediately give to a flower girl who is standing on the platform. Some milk cans have to be loaded, likewise some horses, the post office bags arrive at the last minute, and the mail steams out of the station in good time. And with the departure of the mail my duty finishes—a good day's work, as any one who reads this will allow. No railway servant's billet is a bed of roses, but a porter's surpasses most of them, and trying to make the best of it is not the least part of our work. A good temper and patience are much needed in a porter, and both are very severely tried during the day.

REAL NATIVES.

"HE was a brave man who ate the first oyster." Whether it was curiosity, or instinct, or intention, or luck, that induced this nameless discoverer and benefactor to break open the closely-fitting shell of the quietly resisting bivalve, there was certainly a fair amount of strength of mind required on his part to carry his experiment to the point of tasting the contents of the surrendered citadel. It was an easy thing, when this was accomplished, for other people to follow his example, and having tasted, to enjoy the fruits, and catch, kill, and eat the oysters, till the demand for them became so universal that the only thought was how to supply it, and no heed was given to the probable failure of the bank.

When the yield of the natural oyster-beds began to fall short, people cast about for some means of replenishing the impoverished supplies, but before this could be done the natural history of the oyster had to be studied. Now this is a subject about which very little was known, but as it was a *sine qua non*—no natural history, no oysters—the question was warmly taken up, and the result is the creation of a new and most wonderful industry, the existence of which is, perhaps, hardly known to many people. Though new to us, it is an industry that has been practised in a quiet, unobtrusive way for centuries. Two thousand years ago, the artificial breeding of oysters was carried on by the Romans in Lake Fusaro, and in Lake Avernus. This was undoubtedly the first instance of oyster culture in Europe, though the art has acquired new vigour and been brought to greater perfection during the last few years.

Sergius Orata, in the time of Lucius Crassus the orator, is said, among others, to have made great profit from breeding oysters. The industry became less lucrative after the discovery of the British beds.

The artificial cultivation of oysters is still continued in Lake Fusaro. By "artificial cultivation" I do not mean the breeding by artificial means, as in the case of salmon, where the ova can be taken and hatched out in troughs, or in the case of poultry, whose eggs can be placed in incubators, and the hens thus saved the trouble of sitting on them. The young oysters are born alive, and nothing more can be done than to make great pets of them, protect them from all dangers, and put them where they will fatten quickest, and so be soonest ready for the table. The young are produced in myriads, the mother opening and closing her shell, and "puffing" them forth on the world in little clouds.

Roughly speaking, oysters may be said to be fit for consumption in those months which have *r* in their name. During May, June, and July—the period embraced by the *spatting* or breeding season in various localities—they are not fit for food. It

is therefore easy to remember when the oyster season begins and ends.

I believe the practice that obtains during the month of August among the street Arabs, of building a sort of beehive-shaped edifice of oyster-shells in the streets, which they illuminate at night with a candle placed in the interior, has *something* to do with the advent of oysters; but I never could fully connect in my own mind the relation between oysters and the petition to "Please remember the grotto" addressed by these annual nuisances to passers-by. It is enough to have our daily allowance of requests to "Buy a box o' matches," "Shince boots, sir," to invest "only a ha'penny, sir" in an *Echo*, or to give a "copper, sir, to the sweeper, sir," without the additional tax on one's patience which the "grottoes" annually occasion.

The instincts of the new-born oyster are ambitious. His motto is "Excelsior;" and immediately he is cast on the world of waters he makes for the surface, swimming about with quick vibrations of the *cilia* till he meets some substance to which he may cling. On finding a suitable resting-place, he secretes a fine coating of shell-matter, and comes to an anchor. In his natural state, and barring accidents, he is now settled for life, and henceforth lives to grow, taking no interest in his surrounding circumstances, and passing the existence of a very hermit.

Oysters are not very particular in their attachments. It could hardly be thought that such staid old stagers would evince any affection for the "pipe" or the "bottle." Alas, for the deception of ostreal appearances! Instances of oysters adhering to tobacco pipes and bottles of various descriptions have frequently been met with. Dreadful to say, that when an errant oyster has once conceived such an attachment, it is very hard for him to break it; he sticks to it, *treu und fest*, and the bottle or the pipe becomes an absolute necessity to his existence.

In Mr. Buckland's Museum of Economic Fish Culture, at the International Exhibition, specimens of curiously attached oysters, and oysters in all stages of their growth, may be seen.

The oysters produced on the shores of England are the finest in the world, and of them the best are those found in the estuary of the Thames—the world-famed "natives." The Romans were the first to discover their existence, and they were not long in perceiving the advantages of securing a regular supply in Italy from that source.

Oysters will, if properly packed, live for a considerable length of time out of water. At the present moment there is an oyster company which receives enormous numbers of them from America,

for the purpose of laying them down in more suitable waters, and fattening them for the market. They suffer no harm from their long journey, and after a stay in their new home, become greatly improved in quality, and are sold at a profit.

For the proper fattening of oysters a supply of fresh water is indispensable, and the knowledge of this fact is of great importance in their cultivation. For this reason those oysters are best which breed in bays into which a stream of water is flowing; and this circumstance is turned to account in the preparation of the artificial breeding "beds," or, as they are called in France, the *parcs*. A description of the way in which these beds are arranged at Arcachon, where an enormous and increasing industry has lately sprung up, will give a good idea of the general management of an oyster-breeding establishment. Arcachon is a land-locked basin of large extent, on the coast of the Bay of Biscay, near Bordeaux, with a mud bottom in which grows a long grass-like weed, called *Zostera marina*. This weed is of great service in protecting the oysters from the heat of the sun, for too much heat, like too much cold, is fatal to them. The mud-banks are admirably suited both for the breeding and fattening of these molluscs. Intersected by deep channels, from which the water never entirely recedes, portions of them are left nearly dry at low water, and it is necessary to enclose these parts with low walls, to prevent them from being exposed. Tiles are arranged in rows on the bottom of the beds devoted to breeding purposes, in order to intercept the young oysters as soon as they are born. These tiles are coated with a sort of plaster or chalk varnish, which, when the "spat" begin to grow too large and crowd each other, is easily broken with a knife, and the delicate shells can be detached without injury; the young oysters are then placed in larger beds, with a greater proportion of fresh water running through them, where they fatten for the market.

About two and a half to three inches across is an average size for a good oyster, and they take three years to attain these dimensions. Great care is taken to prevent the ingress of crabs, whelks, starfish, and other enemies; traps are placed to intercept them, and dogs trained to hunt and kill the crabs.

In some cases, instead of tiles, fascines are used to catch the spat, consisting of bundles of sticks tied together, sunk to within a few inches of the bottom, and moored by a large stone. Or circular hedges of posts and sticks are erected, by which the little vagrant oysters are intercepted before they get carried away by the current.

From one to two millions of young are produced at one spatting of a single oyster; each of these is a minute representation of an adult. In a natural state a great proportion of this enormous number

is lost, by being washed away by the tide before attachment to a suitable object can take place, by sandy ground, or by falling a prey to countless enemies. Pure sea-water, with a warm temperature, is indispensable for the spatting of oysters. The fresher the water, the better for fattening purposes.

The chief characteristics of a "native" are a fat, plump, fleshy body, and a smooth, fine shell. The coarser the fish, the coarser the shell. I have at this moment before me an oyster taken from a number imported from Portugal some months ago, and laid down to fatten and improve at Herne Bay. Instead of becoming refined, it has shown its bad breeding by producing a shell seven and a half inches long, and three and a half broad.

When we see native oysters quoted at ten guineas the bushel, and remember that their scarcity has been caused by simple neglect of the plainest rules of economy in their capture, we shall see that such art and skill as are devoted to this industry are absolutely necessary to replenish Nature's stores.

M. Coste, who, fifteen years ago, first suggested to the French Government the possibility of restoring the production of the natural banks, states that the cost of labour at the Arcachon *parcs* alone amounts to £40,000 a year. Women are generally engaged in the work incidental to the care of the *parcs*, such as detaching the oysters from the tiles, sorting them according to their size, picking out the "five fingers," etc. And when we remember the frugality of the French peasants, and the small wages they receive, this sum will give some idea of the value of the oysters annually produced. There is great room for the improvement and extension of the system of cultivating oysters in the United Kingdom, and the success that has attended the experiment—for at first it was but an experiment—in France shows that too much attention cannot be paid to the subject. The demand for this delicious and nutritious food is always increasing: in London alone it is estimated that 800,000,000 oysters of various qualities are annually consumed; and this supply is so far below the demand, that the price is five times as much as it was twenty years ago.

In Australia—particularly in Port Philip—oysters are very abundant. There they are found attached to the overhanging branches of the trees, which in many cases grow close to the water's edge. It is no unusual thing to see a man walking with a *bough* of oysters over his shoulder!

It has been recently discovered by Mr. Henry Lee, the naturalist of the Brighton Aquarium, that oysters serve a useful purpose in cleansing dirty water. How this is effected is not known, but if the sea-water in a tank becomes discoloured, the order is given to "put in some oysters," which are forthwith forced to make themselves useful if they fail as ornaments in the tanks.

C. E. FRYER.

A CAMPAIGN IN KABYLIA.
THE NARRATIVE OF A CHASSEUR D'AFRIQUE.



"THAT LARGE VILLAGE WAS UTTERLY DESTROYED."

BY ERCKMANN-CHATRIAN.

CHAPTER THE SEVENTH.

ON the evening of the 24th June, Commandant Letellier, of the district of Tizi-Ouzou, took four squadrons of cavalry under his command, and selected us for his escort, on account of

our having supported him in his defence of the fort. We halted upon the ashes of Si-kou-Médour. On the 25th we encamped a little above Temda, and on the 26th, very early, we started with the commandant, the four squadrons, and the spahis of the

Arab bureau. We proceeded to the village of Djéma-Sahridj, in the tribe of the Beni-Fraoussen, to receive their submission, and maintain them in it by our presence, for the insurrection was not yet suppressed, and a crowd of insurgents were even yet ready to go and swell the ranks of the enemy.

All that day the artillery was heard in the direction of the National Fort ; there must have been quite a battle going on up there. Our commandant's precaution proved useful ; our horses were picketed in the middle of the village, and not one of the inhabitants, with those before his eyes, felt any inclination to go and fight elsewhere.

The village of Djéma-Sahridj is perhaps one of the most beautiful in Algeria ; seeing it from the valley beneath, one would hardly think so, for rocks are hemming it in and bristling all round it ; but when you have reached it you discover an earthly paradise ; more than fifty springs are bubbling up in the neighbourhood, and in this land of fierce burning heat, water is the first of treasures. Water is abundance, water is wealth. Being thus fortunate, all the houses in Djéma-Sahridj are built of stone, roofed with tiles, surrounded by charming gardens, and half buried under the grateful shade of walnut, cherry, orange, and fig trees, covered with fruit, and trellised from tree to tree are immense vines. Near the mosque, I even observed three palm-trees, which are but rarely found in the elevated Kabyle country. The women and the children alone had forsaken the village ; but they had not gone far, and we could see them watching us fearfully from the crags and rocks.

Then the chasseurs prepared coffee. The Kabyles brought us baskets full of dried figs ; the poor creatures, having witnessed the destruction of so many other villages, were in a state of alarm. At last, our commandant, who had been walking to and fro, deep in thought, gave out the order to march—and we returned to the camp, where our comrades were bivouacked.

We started again next day, ascending the bed of the Sebaon, to encamp a few miles further up, near the sources of the river. The valley contracted as we advanced ; brown rocks rose to our right and our left ; cultivated ground became more scarce ; brambles, dwarf-oak, and lentiscus became the prevailing vegetation. A few miserable Kabyle villages lay scattered at wide intervals amongst these thickets.

The next day, early, the commandant sent off a squadron on a reconnaissance amongst the Beni-Djéma ; then he took us to a very advanced spot in the valley.

About eleven we reached a low hill, where we halted the whole day on the watch. In the evening we returned to the camp. The night was passed very quietly in this remote nook, and the next day

we were off again, reinforced with a company of the first regiment of chasseurs.

After having marched three or four hours through brushwood, where there was no appearance of a path, we arrived near a small solitary marabout, almost hidden in the long grass ; there was an orchard of fig-trees below, on the slope of the ravine, and lower still a Kabyle mill by the river's edge, shut in with high embankments.

This mill, covered with thatch, and its mossy wood-work, seemed to be of great antiquity. The water was supplied by a mill-race of a thousand yards in length, which came down in a rapid torrent over the rocks and boulders, and fell into a great hollow trunk of a tree about fifteen feet long, at the lower end of which was a wooden water-wheel, roughly hewn. In the axle of the wheel was the millstone, in the form of a teetotum. To stop the motion of the machinery, it was only necessary to draw the hollow tree to one side, which, as it was merely suspended by a rope, was easily done, and then the water fell to one side. I examined this attentively, for these mechanical contrivances always interest me.

You see, therefore, that water-wheels are not things of yesterday ; for this structure was at least a hundred and fifty years old. All around it grew ash-trees of enormous size. I had seated myself on the bank to smoke a pipe ; Ignar, my comrade, was on vedette with five men near the marabout, and our chasseurs were pulling up onions in the little garden, to eat with their bread. It might have been about ten o'clock, when the commandant issued orders to remount. We then descended into the dry bed of the river, where we halted.

We had been there a quarter of an hour ; the commandant was standing twenty or thirty paces to the front, when we saw approaching us a European woman on a mule, escorted by two armed Kabyles. This woman was somewhat advanced in years, and was only half clad in a tattered gown ; on her head was a straw hat, with its brim hanging down and fastened over her ears. On reaching the presence of the commandant, she alighted from her mule, and throwing herself at his knees, she kissed his hands, his boots, and even his horse's hoofs. We could not tell the meaning of this ; and as Ali, the horseman of the Arab bureau, was passing near me, I inquired what it all meant.

"That woman," he replied, "is the wife of a colonist of Bordj-Menael, whom Caïd Ali made prisoner with fifty others from the same village ; he is sending her under a flag of truce."

Never have I seen a sadder and more affecting sight. What the unhappy woman said to the commandant I cannot tell ; but I heard him reply—

"Go ! Return to Caïd Ali, and tell him that if

he still refuses to restore you all to liberty, we will come for you. I am tired of waiting."

Then she remounted her mule, and returned escorted by the two Kabyles.

We had not long to wait; about an hour after, we saw, debouching into the valley, a troop of armed Kabyles; they were advancing in slow time, and halted at four hundred yards from us. The commandant went alone to meet them; a brother of Caid Ali advanced on his side; they exchanged a few words; then the Caid's brother, turning round, made a sign to his men, and we soon saw approaching from the end of the gorge a crowd of poor creatures, sinking with exhaustion, ragged, torn, and haggard; they were the remains of the population of Bordj-Menaïel, the survivors of the massacre! Caid Ali had thought fit to retain these as hostages, keeping them in reserve to cut their throats, if he conquered; and if he was beaten, to restore them to liberty; this would be pronounced by an Arab bureau to be a highly extenuating circumstance.

Imagine the joy of these people when they saw us; there were none but old men, sick people, women, and children—some in blouses, some in jackets, hats, or caps, just as they had snatched them up two months before—some at home, some in the fields, where they happened to be at work—all looking like fugitives from gaol; I could hardly describe them better. For seventy days they had been dragged from tribe to tribe; every day these miserable wretches could hear the guns of the column as it drew nearer, and every night Caid Ali drove them further on.

They came to press our hands, and tell us of their miseries. You could scarcely believe the story of their hardships. Every village had to feed them by turns; but they got nothing but corn and dried figs, and every time that the Kabyles met with a check, the villains came whetting the edges of their flissas, and saying—

"Make ready, it is time!"

Then they would pretend to deliberate, and turning round upon their victims, would say—

"Well, no, not to-day, but to-morrow."

I could not bear to tell you of the other cruel outrages which they perpetrated upon them. It would be too horrible! Religious fanaticism makes men worse than the brutes.

The commandant, having recalled Ignar and his five men, mounted all these poor people on mules, which had been requisitioned at the next village, and they departed, under escort of a squad of chasseurs, in the direction of the spot where the rest of the cavalry were stationed. Their orders were to conduct them the next day to Tizi-Ouzou.

The commandant had only retained near him a single man, the one who seemed to him the strongest and most intelligent of the number,

to take him to General Lallemand, who was encamped in Upper Kabylia, near the Djurjura.

I gazed thoughtfully upon this scene. One figure among the Kabyles chiefly drew my attention; he was a tall man, with a prominent nose, a short, black, and curly beard. I was considering where I had seen this man, when Brissard said—

"Don't you recognise that Arab on horseback? It is Said Caid, the black horseman of Temda."

I immediately remembered him. He was riding the same horse, and wore the same black cloak, surveying us with a proud and distant look, and laying his hand upon his beard with an air of perfect indifference. He was come to make his submission, now that longer resistance was useless.

The commandant called the word of command to advance. "Quick march!" he cried, pointing to the mountain-tops. "It will take us six hours to get there." And we started off.

If I had to describe to you the ways by which we passed in single file, always clambering like goats—precipices sometimes on our right, sometimes on our left, the long slopes covered with wild olive-trees, dwarf oaks, myrtles, and junipers as far as the eye could reach beneath us—I should be greatly puzzled to know how to do it. When we reached one peak, and were saying, "Here we are at last," another higher yet came in sight; we thought there would never be an end to it.

Still our Arab ponies seemed none the worse for the exercise; they were quite in their element.

At long intervals we came upon Kabyle villages lately brought to submission; the people, standing at their doors, presented us with water in wooden bowls to refresh us.

At last, after seven hours of climbing, we came in sight of a plateau extending between two sharp peaks, and covered with tall ash-trees and hoary green olive-trees; there stood the little white tents and there moved the red-trousered soldiers of our column.

Commandant Letellier, the colonist whom he had brought, and Caid Ali repaired to head-quarters, and we encamped just above a little ravine where they slaughtered the cattle. At this height the atmosphere is so rarified that at first it seems to make your brain whirl.

I went at once to find out my friend Babelon, the Turco lieutenant. The officers of his regiment had built up for themselves a hut made of leafy boughs of trees; they were just finishing their dinner.

Babelon received me as an old comrade, and the gentlemen called for the cook to return to wait upon me. They kindly made me sit down, which I did with very great pleasure; my appetite was keen. About nine o'clock I left them. We had been fifteen hours in the saddle, and I wanted to sleep.

The next morning, very early, the bugle-call was already sounding for our departure. I ran to thank

Babelon for his kind hospitality; and we took another glass of cognac, standing.

"Come, Goguel!" said he as we were parting, "soon we shall meet again at home. As soon as the expedition is over, I shall get leave, and you will get your discharge."

"The sooner, the better," I replied, laughing.

He watched me galloping away, and returned to his tent.

We then pursued our way along the very ridge of the mountains. The air was free, and pure, and keen. Far away, on the horizon, was the blue sea, fringed with a thin line of white where the waves broke in foam upon the shore; Algiers, almost suspended in the sky, with its harbour, its gardens, and its white houses; and, on the other hand, the lofty Djurjura, whose massive buttresses, rugged with rocks and woods, were dotted with Arab villages as far as the eye could reach in every direction—as far as the extremity of the plain. Every fresh examination of the scene discovered new objects of interest. It was a grand—a beautiful prospect! What a colony would France have there, if a tide of European emigration had but set in thither during the last thirty years! All the turbulent spirits whom want and privation have driven into disorder, would live there in the enjoyment of plenty; and then we should have no reason to dread the revolutions that want begets. But the rule of the sword is fruitful of all kinds of evils. The men who turn their backs upon their native land, to seek fortune elsewhere, prefer to emigrate to America, where all men are free, than to bend in Algiers under the heavy despotism of Arab bureaux. Whilst at home we have millions of workers without a foot of land that they can call their own, down there in Algeria are millions of acres uncultivated, and waiting for industrious arms to throw up crops in the greatest abundance.

The thoughts of all the chasseurs were engaged, no doubt, upon the same subject—not a man spoke a word; and we gazed in silence, dropping our bridles loosely upon our horses' necks, and allowing them to go at their own pace.

At nine o'clock we passed the village of Echeriden, where, a few days before, the decisive action of the campaign had been fought. After this blow, the Kabyles, driven out of their last stronghold, had no alternative but to submit.

That large village was utterly destroyed. The tall trees were so battered and hacked, and the smaller ones so completely mown down by the grape-shot, that they reminded one of corn laid by a high wind.

There I saw a Kabyle weep! I never had seen one before. He could not tell where his house had stood. His wife, crouching near him, hid her face between her knees, and their children seemed bewildered. Poor creatures! that noble chieftain

Caïd Ali had forced them into the insurrection by the threat that he would burn them out if they refused to join him. They were all in utter ruin; but Caïd Ali had no cause for fear; he knew that his atrocious acts would obtain easy forgiveness from the Arab bureaux; for might they not have occasion for his services at some future time?

And Caïd Alis and Arab bureaux are found here and there in Europe too, incessantly intriguing to involve nations in war, whenever they may be seeking for mere justice; selfish men are the same everywhere; self-interest rouses in them the ferocity of tigers.

About eight, we arrived at the National Fort, and we picketed our horses on the road as we entered it. The weather was hot. Brissard undertook to find a breakfast for us; then we went to take a few bottles of beer with the artillery drivers, who received us hospitably. We talked of the events of the war. Caïd Ali had attempted to take the fort by storm. He had had ladders provided, frightening his men into valour by telling them that whoever failed at least to touch the wall would be accursed—that he would have no part in the delights of paradise—that he would slide down a razor's edge till he reached perdition. Well! well! it was only the Arab version of the Popish delusions—*Lourde* and *La Sallette* over again!

We listened attentively, for such things awake painful reflections. In every land the ignorant are but tools in the hands of fanatics to awake terror. Marabouts of this kind are in our midst in our own France. What can we do but reflect upon our position?

At three we pursued our route to Tizi-Ouzou, escorting a couple of mitrailleuses and a couple of rifled guns. At seven we entered the fort.

Here ended our campaign.

Early in June, the rumour was spread that soldiers whose term of service was ended would very soon receive their discharge; and on the morning of the 12th of June, Ignar, myself, and twenty-two Chasseurs d'Afrique were leaving Tizi-Ouzou for Dellys. We left behind us Brissard, with Lieutenant Cayatte, and the rest of the chasseurs.

That excellent comrade and brave soldier Brissard, and the obliging quartermaster Erbs, accompanied us as far as the Turkish fountain. When they left us, tears were standing in their eyes.

That evening we reached Dellys, and embarked in a coasting vessel for Algiers, where we arrived next day, and from thence we travelled by railway to Blidah.

At last, on the 15th of July, we got our routes in our pockets, and came home as fast as we could.

On my arrival home at Saint Dié, I found my poor father dying of the terrors of the war, and our

country in Prussian occupation. I had seen in Africa something of the blessings of military government, and now I found the same in France! The only difference which I found in our favour was that the Prussian Arab bureaux had not been able, in spite of all their good wishes, to restore to his command the Caïd Napoleon the Third, who might have been useful to them, when they wanted war again, by diverting the minds of the people from aspirations after liberty.

And now, my friend, if you ask me for my opinion upon all these matters, whether I attribute the misery of Algeria to Arab bureaux, bach-agas, agas, caïds, sheiks; or to those army contractors, who after every razzia buy up hundreds of oxen and sheep at nominal prices, and sell them the very same day to our armies at from fifteen to twenty times their prime cost, which I know to be a fact—if you ask me whether those are the men who are responsible for our misfortunes, I boldly reply, No. Our governments alone are guilty.

If Louis Philippe, whose fondness for money was so well known, had been obliged to pay out of his own purse only the fourth part of what Algeria cost us, he would never have administered the affairs of the colony by Arab bureaux. Certainly not. He would have provided public officers of a very different stamp—good prefects, honourable agents, impartial judges, responsible men—whose reports he would have carefully examined and verified, for whose expenditure he would have required vouchers down to the last centime; and if he had anywhere detected a deficiency, he would not have allowed the matter to remain in suspense for fourteen years; he would have wanted some account of the matter; he would have moved heaven and earth, and rummaged through piles of papers to save himself from loss. But as *he* was not paymaster, but only France, it mattered little to him, and he pronounced the administration of the Arab bureaux to be faultless, the more so be-

cause repeated African wars furnished him with opportunities for showing off his sons before the army, and to gain an easy reputation for those men as great generals.

Again, if Napoleon the Third had been obliged to fight his own wars, and carry his rifle, and knapsack, and eight or ten days' provisions upon his back, in spite of his wonderful confidence in his star and his destiny, I believe we should have been much less frequently plunged into warfare. Instead of suffering the Kabyles to be worried with vexations, he would have ordered them to be treated with fairness and equity, so as to avoid causes of irritation. But, of course, whilst the soldiers were roasting under the sun of Africa and of Mexico, the emperor was quietly sitting at home in his easy chair, and perhaps reflecting how much war would strengthen the position of his dynasty. His sole confidence was in his army to support his dynasty; and the only way to keep the army well affected was to deal lavishly in promotions, crosses, pensions. War procures everything, without speaking of plunder.

The reproaches, therefore, which fall upon the Arab bureaux, and the condemnation pronounced against them, fall with greater justice upon the government which organised them, and made their interests identical with those of the dynasty.

The dynasty! everything for the dynasty! Such is the story of France for the last seventy years.

What these governments have done for France, we see but too well. It is the same in Africa. Here as there, we have a magnificent country, but dynastic egotism has brought all our disasters upon us.

The Republic alone, the Republic, which has no interest apart from the interests of the nation, she alone can restore happiness to our unfortunate country, and raise Algeria to the position of one of the finest colonies in the world, by establishing a just government, which shall deal equal justice both to Arabs and to Frenchmen.

MEN WHO FACE DEATH.

THE WAR CORRESPONDENT.—II.

IN TWO PARTS.—PART THE FIRST.

NEXT to the spy mania as a source of danger for special correspondents, must be reckoned camp followers. Taking them all in all, it would be difficult to collect a more unmitigated set of ruffians than those who make up the tail of an army. Mule-drivers and carters, sutlers and contractors' employés—there is but little to choose between them. These drivers and muleteers are

recruited from the scum of the large towns; as a general thing they are utterly ignorant of the management of animals, and wholly indifferent as to their wants, facts which account for the enormous mortality among the animals of the baggage train of an army.

The contractors' employés are pretty much of the same class—the fellows who drive the cattle and sheep, and bring in corn and other necessities—all these are the loafers of the large towns,

the idle ne'er-do-wells who, hating steady labour of any kind, jump eagerly at the change of life and high wages offered at such times. The country labourers and carters, who are the class from whom the drivers should be drawn, cannot be tempted away. The calling out of the reserves strips the country of the great majority of young and vigorous men, and those who are left can command such high wages that the life of an army driver does not offer inducements sufficient to tempt them to leave their homes.

But even more dangerous than the drivers and muleteers are the sutlers. These are the men who follow the army with carts loaded with wine, bacon, and bread; who sell spirits upon the sly, buy stolen goods for a fraction of their value, without asking troublesome questions, and are ready to steal upon their own account when the occasion offers. And it is among them, and the women who accompany them, that the harpies of the battlefield, the wretches who strip the dead and murder the living, are principally found.

The more perfect the organisation of the army, the more densely populated the country, the less reason is there to fear the camp followers.

When the principal portion of the provisions and stores are brought up by rail, or when the convoys of carts and wagons are sent off with military guards, the power of mischief of the drivers is much circumscribed. The danger to outsiders is greatest where the warfare is of an irregular kind, and carried on in a thinly populated country. Such, for example, was the war carried on by the Garibaldians in the Tyrol in 1866. Brescia was the base of the army, which was over thirty thousand strong. Beyond this town there was no railway, and all provisions had to be taken up in carts some forty miles.

It was in this campaign that an adventure happened to me, which gave me a thorough sickener of camp followers.

I had arrived at the little town of Rocca d' Anfo, charmingly situated on, or rather above, the Lago d' Idro. It was at the time Garibaldi's head-quarters, and some eight or ten thousand men were camped in the neighbourhood. Garibaldi himself was lying in the Castle, from the shot-wound which he had received six days before, at the fight on Monte Suello. The village was crowded with troops and commissariat wagons, and I searched in vain for a place to sleep in. Fortunately I succeeded in purchasing three loaves of bread, one for myself and two for my horse; and when night came on I left the village, turned up a by-lane, and entered a vineyard.

Here I tied my horse up, took his bridle from his mouth, broke up the bread, and fed him; and then putting my valise under my head, and my pistols close within reach, I wrapped myself in my cloak,

and was soon asleep. The next morning I rode on to Bagadino, which was the farthest point to which the Garibaldians had advanced, although not the point at which they most nearly approached the Austrians. The road ran for some distance along the hillside, above Lago d' Idro, and three miles beyond Rocca d' Anfo was the scene of the fight on July 4th, in which Garibaldi was wounded. There the Garibaldians had by no means covered themselves with honour, for they had been beaten back by a very inferior force of Tyrolese riflemen, who had lined the slope of the hill.

At this point the road forked, the right-hand road falling gradually from the high level on the hillside down to Caffaro, which is a village situated in the valley just above the head of the lake. It is divided in two by a considerable stream coming down from a ravine on the left. It was up this ravine that the left-hand branch of the road ran to the village of Bagadino. Caffaro was held by the Garibaldians, but Storo, three miles up and across the valley, was occupied by the Austrians. Bagadino was altogether out of our line of advance, which lay straight up the valley, and was occupied only as being a large village, and affording shelter and a certain amount of support to a couple of thousand men.

It was this road, which ran high up on the hillside, that I followed. At the corner of the ravine above Caffaro, three guns had been placed in the road, with their muzzles pointing through holes which had been knocked in the parapet, down upon Caffaro. The artillerymen belonged to the line, and tying up my horse, I entered into conversation with the officer in command. He was a pleasant fellow, and in a short time we were sitting together in a little leafy bower, which constituted his abode, by the roadside, breakfasting off his rations, and a supply of bread and sausage which I had brought from Rocca d' Anfo. We both had wine, which was the one thing really plentiful there, and he ordered his men to give my horse a feed of corn. We had just finished breakfast and lit our cigars—I always carry an abundance of cigars with me; they are the best passports in the world—when a sergeant came up and said that the Austrians were advancing. Our ears as well as our eyes told us the news was true a moment later. The Austrians had advanced unobserved among the wooded lanes until within a few hundred yards of Caffaro, when a sentry had given the alarm. The Garibaldians in the village rushed out hastily to meet them, and a lively musketry fire broke out just as we looked over the parapet.

The Austrians were too strong however, and the red-shirts soon fell back upon the village, the Austrians following in skirmishing order.

"Point at the bridge," the artillery officer said; "don't fire till the Austrians cross."

There was a sharp fight in the village, and then the Garibaldians fell back across the bridge, establishing themselves in the houses upon the southern side.

By this time relief was coming up; the troops who were bivouacked along the whole distance of the road from Caffaro to Rocca d' Anfo came pouring up; our guns opened upon the village as the Garibaldians took the offensive, and the Austrians evacuated the village and fell back up the valley, the Garibaldians preparing to advance. I remained here for some hours, but nothing more took place, and, bidding good-bye to my artillery friend, I rode up the ravine to Bagadino, five miles distant.

It was a good-sized village, very prettily situated, and crowded with the red-shirts. Every house was occupied, and I saw that a search for a bed here was likely to be hopeless. I bought some bread, and being determined not to sleep out in the air again, and its being above all necessary for me to find some quiet place where I could write my letter, I made up my mind to push on. There were no troops beyond Bagadino, and I found by the map that there was a small village some three or four miles further along the road. As there were, I knew, no Austrians in that direction, I determined to push on. I had met several officers of my acquaintance, and had done a good deal of talking, consequently it was getting dark when I rode out of Bagadino.

The three miles were dreadfully long ones, and it was dark before I came to a house of any kind. It stood as far as I could see by itself, but I troubled little about that, for over the door was a sign. It was too dark to read it; but I saw the place was an inn. In a yard beside it were a few animals, which looked to me like horses or mules. I shouted, but no one came out; so I got off my horse, tied his bridle up to a ring by the door, and went in. The door opened directly into a large room, or rather kitchen, where five or six men were drinking and smoking. There was, I observed, a general start at my entry, and more than one hand clasped the knife in his sash.

"Good evening, signors," I said. "Is the landlord here? I can't make any one hear outside."

"Si, signor," one of the party said, rising. "Eccolo—what can I do for your lordship?"

"I want something to eat and a bed," I said. "My horse is at the door, and I want a night's lodging for him too."

"Impossible!" the host said, with a despairing shrug of the shoulders. "I am more than full already."

"I don't want to ride back to Bagadino," I said. "Can you direct me to any house near?"

At this moment the host was called sharply by two of the men, who had spoken together in a low

voice. He went to them, and a short conversation took place in a whisper. Then the landlord turned.

"These signors have expressed their willingness to give up their room, if you will pay them for the accommodation. As for the horse, there is a shed empty close here."

"Willingly," I said, delighted at the thought of a bed. "If I can have the room to myself, I will willingly give them five francs for their civility in giving up their room to me."

The bargain was struck. I then went out with the landlord, put the horse's bridle on my arm, and walked with him to a small shed a hundred yards back upon the road. It was empty, and the landlord brought in a large armful of hay, which he threw down before the horse. I took the saddle off, unstrapped the valise and holsters, and putting them on my arm, returned with the landlord.

"Have you no stables near the house?" I asked.

"Yes," he said, "but they are occupied."

I thought this was curious, but thinking over the mules I had noticed in the yard, and the old Garibaldian caps which one or two of the men in the inn-parlour had on the table before them, I jumped at once to the conclusion that the fellows were a party of commissariat mule-drivers who had managed to steal away, with the intention of crossing over into the Trent Valley, and there disposing of the animals and their burdens.

I understood now why they had so willingly given up their room to me, rather than risk my returning to Bagadino, whence I could, if I had suspected them, dispatch a company of soldiers, when their shrift would probably have been a short one.

As I thought the matter over, I felt that I had got into an unpleasant position; but with the brace of heavy revolvers in my holster, I felt fully a match for the party at the inn. When I got in I was shown to my room, which was of fair size and more comfortable than I had expected. Here I had a wash, and then, taking the precaution of locking the door and putting the key into my pocket, I went down-stairs again. Two of the men had gone out, but I concluded, after a minute examination of their countenances, that the three who remained were about as unmitigated ruffians as one could want to see. I was kept some time waiting for my food, but when it came I was more than repaid for the delay, for the dishes were fairly cooked, and to one who had eaten nothing but bread for forty-eight hours, were trebly enjoyable. The wine, however, I did not like: it had a peculiar flavour about it which struck me at once. I might not have noticed it at any other time, but my suspicion having been already aroused, it struck me at once that it was drugged.

HESTER MORLEY'S PROMISE.

BY HESBA STRETTON,

AUTHOR OF "THE DOCTOR'S DILEMMA," ETC. ETC.

CHAPTER THE FORTY-THIRD.

IN THE SUNSHINE.

JOHN MORLEY was in the condition of a man who has been dwelling underground for so long a period that he has almost forgotten the glory of the upper world. For him, in his gloomy and abandoned home, there had been no sweet influences of sunshine and breeze, no change of season, no opening of leaf-buds, no soft starry fall of snow. He had obstinately closed his senses to all the healing agencies of nature; and with almost greater obstinacy he had steeled himself against the tender energy of religion. He had been voluntarily sojourning in "a land of darkness, as darkness itself; and of the shadow of death, without any order, and where the light is as darkness,"

Perhaps the first thing necessary for him was to reawaken his sensibility towards outer influences. Grant had from the first recognised this necessity, and had urged him to take a long walk daily in the beautiful neighbourhood surrounding Little Aston. But John Morley had not the moral courage and strength to break out of the dungeon where he was kept by Giant Despair. It was needful that the angels should lay hold upon him and bring him forth, and set him without the gates.

He was free then at last. He had come up from the depths. The wonderful sunshine of Burgundy dazzled him, but he felt its warmth and its light penetrate to the very core of his heart. The great fountain of life sent electric currents through all his numbed veins. He could not think at first—he was too bewildered. It was enough to stand by and look on with newly-opened eyes at the moving panorama surrounding him. Everything was new to him, and removed him by its novelty from the sorrowful memories of his old life. He scarcely spent an hour indoors from early in the morning until the last bell rung at ten o'clock, when all the inhabitants of Ecquemenville thought it the right thing to retire peacefully into their own chambers. In the boulevard of the little town, which was almost deserted, he spent every noontide in the shadow of its green aisle; with the trees growing thickly on each side, only opening here and there to give a glimpse of the shining waters of the river lapping against their deep-struck roots. As the fierce heat of the sun declined, he would return to the streets, where the inhabitants turned out of their dwellings in the cool of the evening to chatter and gossip, or flirt, with all the gaiety and light-heartedness of the people of a warm climate. He was

never tired of watching the groups that gathered on the pavements before the doors of the houses, who saluted him as he passed to and fro, with the grace and politeness of their country—a politeness which he acknowledged with a strange smile upon his face. He could not understand a word they said, but this only added to the charm. Was he indeed the same sorrow-stricken man whose dishonour had been upon every tongue, and who had had to shrink from the glance of every eye? He did not even ask himself this question; he was too full of the novelty of the present moment.

Besides all this, he would come in at meal-times with a wholesome, hearty appetite for the dainties the widow Leinet provided for him and Hester. The widow Leinet was put upon her mettle. She believed firmly that the English lived solely upon raw beef-steak and strong ale; and now that she had two of these benighted barbarians under her roof, she was fired with an ardent resolution to show them the mysteries and marvels of French cooking. Such friandises, such omelettes, such soups, such gâteau, she placed upon the table, as would have made a gourmand's mouth water. She regretted sorely that it was not the season for the delicate vineyard snails, which were sold for a penny apiece even in the economical town of Ecquemenville, that she might have set a ragoût of them before monsieur and mademoiselle. For the honour of their country, her neighbours picked out the finest of their fruit for the foreigners, and presented it in lavish profusion. From his first meal in the morning—consisting of a bowl of rich milk, into which was poured a cupful of the very essence of coffee, with a dainty new-baked roll added to it—to his dinner at seven o'clock, with its four or five courses and generous wines, John Morley was fed upon the choicest of food. Diet makes a marvellous difference to a man's spiritual condition; and Hester, with her wise, observant eyes, learned some lessons in Ecquemenville which she would have failed to gather from the ascetic fare and lenten nutriment of their former mode of life.

But none of these outer things had the same influence over Hester. Her mind had not been suffering from a long malady, and could not therefore enjoy the almost sensuous pleasures of the change which was bringing health to her father. She was devoted to him, but, in spite of her devotion, her heart clung with bitter strength to the love of her own country, the love of old familiar places, the love, scarcely acknowledged, of Carl.

She did not think willingly of the last. They were separated by a miserable and irrevocable destiny. At times she was almost glad that no stronger tie bound them together than mere friendship—a friendship, also, more implied than professed. If he had loved her, her duty would have been divided, but now it belonged solely to her father.

and did the church bells chime as they were wont to do?

Hester's favourite place for indulging in these mournful questionings was the cool, lofty, solemn interior of the fine old church of Ecquemontville. She chose a chair for herself, where she was half hidden by a pillar, and there she sat, hour after



"SHE CHOSE A CHAIR FOR HERSELF."

What the final end of their present strange life would be, she could not by any effort foresee. Not a whisper reached them from that far-off place where all her years had been passed. Could it be possible that the course of events was going on as usual in Little Aston, which for her was as the buried cities of ancient times? Were the streets there still? Was her old home, the only home that she had ever known, yet standing in its dark northern corner, where the sun never shone upon it? Was the chapel open Sunday after Sunday,

hour, letting all the pageantry of Catholic ceremonies pass before her, but paying no heed to it. She heard the organs answering to one another in grand volumes of sound, which made her tremble, but she never asked herself why it was so.

The vintage came, with its deepened mirth and hilarity; and John Morley's force and energy had returned to him as if he had never wasted them in morbid brooding; but Hester's silent longings were growing day by day more enfeebling. The fine balance of health was disturbed by her cease-

less conjectures as to both past and future. She had never renewed her conversation with her father about the circumstances of the night preceding their hurried flight from England. Rose was dead, and amid her other troubled thoughts, it seemed very nearly a relief to think of her as one who has made the final escape from the evils of life. But she could not be sure that her father's hand was not guilty of her death. He had said it was not so; but his reason had been so shaken at the time, that she could not trust implicitly to his word or memory. Who could be guilty, if not he? It would be impossible to return to England, for their flight had fixed the crime upon him. If they ever set foot again in their native land, he would be called upon to expiate the death of Rose, either as a murderer or a madman. Oh, the exile, the terrible banishment! A home-sickness laid its chilly hand upon her; and she felt that no life, however bright or joyous, could wean her from the yearning to see her own people and hear her own language once again.

Long before reaching Ecquemonville, Robert Waldron knew his quest was successful. The driver of the diligence, to whom it seemed an extraordinary thing to have another Englishman as a passenger in so short a time after the arrival of John Morley and Hester, informed him that two of his compatriots had made Ecquemonville their residence since the beginning of June. On being questioned, he described them as a man with very white hair, and seemingly of great age, and a young lady, his daughter, very pretty, very amiable, and very sad. Robert could not doubt that these were the two he was seeking; and his heart throbbed, as it had not done for some time past, with a feeling of satisfaction and happiness. Every step of the road brought him nearer to Hester, to whom he was carrying glad tidings. Whatever she had thought of her father's deed, it must be an infinite relief to her to hear that he had again escaped being guilty of a dark and cardinal sin. The way home was open to them; they could return to it at any hour they pleased. He could not fail to be welcome with such consolation as this.

Hester was sitting at the window with her arms resting on the sill, looking listlessly down upon the dull street and market-square, which seemed stamped ineffaceably upon her brain. The diligence came in, and she saw the group of laundresses round the fountain pause as usual at their work, and the loungers throng round the conveyance, hiding the only traveller who descended from it. She was very heartsick this afternoon, and all this was nothing to her except one more scene in the shifting panorama of the streets. But an hour afterwards, as she still sat there, silent, spiritless, half broken-hearted, the stranger appeared on the uneven pavement below, coming swiftly towards

her, with upraised face and eyes fastened upon her. Hester caught convulsively at the window-sill, and leaned forward with a fascinated and incredulous gaze. Her father was in the room behind her, reading the only English book in their possession—a New Testament, which she had carried from little Hester's bed-room to Carl's chapel; and here in the street below, close at the door, was Robert Waldron, who had seen her, knew her, and was hastening towards her.

Hester laid her head down upon the hands which grasped the window-sill, and felt an overwhelming, unutterable tremor of suspense. She could neither stir nor speak to give warning to her father. A useless warning it would have been, for already Robert's foot was upon the winding staircase which led up to their room. A cry only broke from her benumbed lips—a smothered cry, which her father did not hear. Step by step, each one adding to the intense strain upon her, came the approaching tread, and seemed to tarry at the door, as if to lengthen out her anguish. She heard her father lay his book down, and knew that he was looking up to see who was coming. Then the door opened, and they stood face to face.

John Morley and Robert Waldron stood face to face, both alike stricken dumb. It was so long since they had seen one another thus directly, and so many changes had passed over both, that they recognised each other more by intuition than by positive knowledge. There was so much also to be uttered by each of them, that speech seemed altogether insufficient and powerless. They looked into one another's eyes, and no other gaze read the changeful, lamentable story of the past, as it fitted across their memories, and looked out in mournful glances at each other's face. Hester did not dare to lift her head and look at them. She was waiting shrinkingly to catch the first word.

"You have pursued and found me!" cried John Morley at last, in a voice which sounded clearly and coldly through the room, and fell in icy tones upon her ear.

"God forbid that I should harm you!" said Robert Waldron in tremulous accents; "I come as your friend."

"Do you know what you have done for me?" asked John Morley again, after a long pause, as if both had exhausted themselves in the utterance of the first few words; "let me tell you what you have done. I loved Rose as I never loved Hester's mother. I loved her with infatuation, with idolatry, against the voice of my conscience, against the voice of the Church, against the inward voice of God. I knew she would bring no strength, no real joy to me, yet I loved her. I loved her as Adam loved Eve, when he bartered Paradise and righteousness for her. You never loved her one-half, one-tenth as much."

"I never loved her at all," muttered Robert, unconscious of his own words.

"She might have learned to love me," John Morley continued mournfully; "she would at least have remained faithful to me, if you had not come between us. Because she was very fair to look upon, and facile to temptation, you tempted her, and I lost her. Yet you say you never loved her!"

"I was no better than a boy," answered Robert, urging the plea that had often soothed himself.

"A boy!" exclaimed John Morley, with a lifetime of agony in his voice; "a boy! and Rose gave me up for you! Yet I know not which love was the greater sin, yours or mine. I lavished upon her an inordinate love. We both wronged the feeble creature by our passion—you and I."

"If it be possible for you to forgive me," cried Robert, "forgive me now."

"Forgive you!" he repeated; "ay, I have forgiven you both. God knows I forgave her before I found that she was dead."

"She is not dead," said Robert in a hoarse voice, which almost failed him. Low as it was, it reached Hester's ear, and she turned quickly round to see his face. How changed he was! how little like the gay, self-pleased, handsome man she had last seen! He was looking at her father, almost unconscious of her presence, and his expression was one of poignant shame and remorse.

"Not dead!" echoed John Morley. "I laid her down, as gently as I could, upon her own little sofa in her own room; but I tell you she was dead."

"We found her there," answered Robert; "Lawson's mother called Grant and me in, and she lay there like one dead; but there was life yet, and she is living now."

"Come here to me, Hester," cried John Morley; "let me hold your hand."

In an instant she was at his side, her arm about his neck, and her lips pressed again and again to his face. She could not speak at first, in her sudden excess of gladness. Rose was not dead—not murdered; and she saw clearly how free they were once more to return to England, to go back to Little Aston, to enter the old home again. She laid her head upon her father's shoulder, and sobbed, "Thank God!"

"How can it be?" said John Morley in a tone of almost incredulous wonder.

"I will tell you," answered Robert hurriedly: "the blow had just missed its most fatal aim, as it had done with me. You had but barely missed murdering her, as you missed murdering me two years ago."

"Me!" cried John Morley; "I desired to injure neither of you. I never lifted up my hand against one or the other."

Robert Waldron made no answer; he was scarcely surprised at John Morley's denial; but

Hester looked up into her father's face, and spoke entreatingly.

"Let us speak openly to one another now," she urged; "you remember the stranger whom Grant brought into our house almost dead, about two years ago. Oh, you knew who it was, and who had struck that frightful blow. It was Robert Waldron, father. Did you not know it was Robert Waldron?"

"Stop!" he answered, raising his hand to his head; "let me think all this over a little while."

They waited for a minute or two in unbroken silence, hearing the distant chatter of the laundresses about the fountain, and the tattoo of a drum being beaten at a great distance off. Hester had sunk down on her knees beside her father, and rested her head against his arm. She could hardly endure the suspense, but she controlled herself; while Robert stood by, patient and immovable, willing to give John Morley what time he chose to collect his thoughts.

"I dare not think of it for long, even now," he said, his face, which had taken a hue of health, growing pale once more; "but listen to me, and I will speak as I would speak before God. I never knew till this moment that you had been under my roof. It was well I did not know. You had promised faithfully that you would never enter the street where I dwelt."

"I broke that promise," said Robert, as John Morley paused.

"It never came into my mind that you could break a solemn promise like that, the only penalty I demanded from you. I wished you no harm; I only wished to be left to my sorrow and dishonour. How Rose came there I do not know to this day. I believed Hester was gone to London to see her dying; and at first a superstition came across me; I could not help supposing that her spirit had come back to the home she had so cruelly and shamefully abandoned. How could Rose be there in the body?"

"Father," said Hester, "she was the poor creature we gave shelter to in the old nursery. She came to me one night as I left the chapel—poor, homeless, very ill, without hope in the world; and I remembered the promise you made me take long ago, before you married her, that I would be as her very own child to her. Don't you recollect? What else could I do for her?"

"Recollect!" said John Morley; "ay, I recollect. I understand it all now."

"I did right?" she murmured.

"Right!" he repeated, laying his hand fondly on her head; "you are always right, my daughter. We will talk about it at another time," he continued, after a brief silence. "It is too painful for me still. You say that she is alive, that no murder has been committed at all. Where is she now?"

"She is at home," answered Robert, and John Morley shook a little at the words; "we could not move her then, nor yet. She is still very feeble. What would you have had us do with her, when she was on the point of death?"

"That is enough," he said; "leave us now."

Robert looked sadly from him to Hester, and from Hester to him again. They were occupied with one another, and could spare no thought for him. Whatever they had to say to each other, whatever resolves and plans they might make, they wished to do it in his absence. He felt a vehement yearning to touch Hester's hand, to see her look at him once more, and hear her speak to him; but she was clinging to her father, looking into his face, and speaking to him broken words of gladness. He found that he had no right there any longer, though he had been the messenger of the glad tidings; and with a quiet farewell, which scarcely fell upon their inattentive ears, he left them alone with one another and their new joy.

CHAPTER THE FORTY-FOURTH.

WHAT MIGHT HAVE BEEN.

ROBERT WALDRON lingered a day or two, lounging about the dull little town, not daring to force himself again into the presence of John Morley, unless he gave some sign that a second interview would be welcome. He had expected they would have returned at once to England, but no places were taken in the diligence; and he could not make up his mind to leave them there with an uncertainty as to what they meant to do. He wished to see Hester alone, but now she accompanied her father everywhere that he went. The sultry heat of the summer was quite gone, and the clear, bright autumn air breathed fresh exhilaration into veins which had grown languid through the fervour of the sunshine. Robert could see them from his window at the hotel whenever they quitted the house: John Morley, with a new vigour and strength, his white head held erect, his tread firm and steady; and Hester, herself again, yet more than her former self, hopeful, bright, and courageous, ready to face any future, now that the heavy pressure of exile had passed away. What could they be intending to do? He was undergoing a sore travail of heart, crucifying his best and most cherished hope. The gulf between him and Hester was too wide now, even to his own eyes, for it ever to be bridged over; and he was striving to look across it with a willingness to see her happy in an Eden to which he could find no entrance.

At last he bethought himself that he must go. The Hester who belonged to him was pining away in Little Aston, and he knew that she would soon be lost to him for ever. Every hour that he wasted here, he lost some small tender trace of his child's

character, which would be all that remained to him of her in a little while. Carl would be with her, he thought bitterly, and Carl was loved more dearly than he was. Yet for his own sake he should be near her, to work out the whole of the heavy penance. But he could not leave without one effort to see Hester again, and to ask if he could render no help to her or her father. Fortunately he saw John Morley start out alone, the third evening after his interview with him, and make his way towards the rock which overlooked the town; and in a few minutes afterwards he presented himself at the widow Leinet's door.

The widow Leinet was giving Hester a lesson in spinning, in the dark cool room at the back of her shop, and the burr of the wheel made his step inaudible. He trode cautiously, and looked in through the half-open door for some time, glad to see Hester while he remained unseen. Her face had caught a tinge of colour, the richer bloom of a warm climate, and her eyes had brightened from their long period of gloom. She smiled more readily and talked more gaily, but still with an air of gravity, as if laughter had been too long a stranger to her lips to play about them as about other girlish faces. He fancied, but it could only have been fancy, that she had borrowed some of the coquettish graces of the country-women about her; her dress, the slight toss of her pretty head, the movement of her little foot upon the treadle, her whole attitude, had just the touch of careless consciousness of beauty which was the only charm she had needed. He knew now how well she would have played her part in his life of luxury and elegance; and he stood watching her, his heart contracting with a very bitter regret, when the widow Leinet caught sight of him, and announced his presence by a little vivacious shriek.

"I am about to return to England," he said, advancing with the pleasant graciousness of manner which he had at command; "and I called to inquire if mademoiselle or her father has any commission there.—For Heaven's sake, Hester," he added, addressing her in English, "let me speak to you once more before I go. I cannot leave you thus."

"You can speak to me here," she answered; "no one will understand you but me."

She had pushed aside her spinning-wheel, and risen to offer him her hand, which he had not touched for so long a time, and which he held in his like a treasure he would not willingly relinquish, though he was compelled to preserve an outward calmness.

"Come at least with me into yonder garden," he urged; "I cannot speak to you freely, and I dare not look at you, while this woman is standing by."

The garden was a small square space, enclosed on every side, with the high wall of a convent at the end throwing one-half of it into shadow; a little

green secluded spot, left to the wild luxuriance of growth under those warm skies. Without a word, Hester stepped out of the dark room into the glow of the evening sun, walking at his side with a measured step, and a grave set face, looking steadily forwards, without a glance up into his eyes.

"You hate me, Hester," he said. It was his first and chief thought when he saw how quickly her sunny grace had fled at the sight of him.

"No," she answered gently, but without raising her eyes to his as he had hoped; "no, I could never hate you."

"Yet it is I who have brought all the sorrow into your life," he continued.

"Yes," she said.

"Then you must hate me," he persisted; "if I had never lived, if I had died years ago, your life would have been as smooth as the life of other girls."

"Yes," said Hester.

"Yet you loved me once," he went on. "Do you remember how you sat on a footstool at my feet, holding my hand in yours, and slipping off my ring to try it on your own little fingers? It is this same ring, Hester."

He stretched out his hand to her, and she bent her eyes for a moment upon the diamonds flashing in the sunlight; but she looked away again steadily and sadly, her lips trembling, and a nervous quivering in her half-closed eyelids.

"Do you remember it?" he asked, thinking, not of the ring, but of the love she had borne for him.

"I remember it well," she murmured.

"My God! what a miserable fool I have been!" he cried bitterly. "You loved me then, little Hetty."

"Yes," she said—"dearly."

"Dearly!" he echoed, "she loved me dearly; and it might have been, it might possibly have been that she would have grown up loving me, with her true, tender, faithful heart. Would that have been possible?"

"Yes," she answered, her voice faltering, and the tears standing in her steadfast eyes.

Robert Waldron's passion, and the pain born of it, had been poignant enough before; but now it had reached a point when all further pain is akin to rapture. His martyrdom was awakening within him a heroism, which was stirring with sharp blissful pangs of life through his whole spirit. Hester fixed her searching yet tender gaze upon him, with no deepening colour on her cheeks, or look of shyness in her eyes.

"Yes," she said softly, "I loved you dearly, and I can never hate you. I will not pretend to misunderstand you. You wish to know if that little child's love would have grown with my growth, had

no barrier of your own raising come between us. I think it would. If there be any consolation or strength to you in the thought, I know that I should have loved you. Let that suffice for you. Be sure that I can never, never hate you."

Was it any consolation to him? It was a pain so exquisite at the moment that he could not have answered the question to himself. They strolled together along the grassy walk of the garden, he wondering what words from his lips or hers would next stir the quiet air which seemed listening to them. The convent-bell rang for vespers, and a little babble of women's voices in the convent-garden followed it.

"Hester," he said, dropping his voice to a whisper, "I will make myself worthy of the love that might have been. Give me but one proof of that old, childish love of yours."

"What proof can I give you?" she asked, her clear eyes meeting his frankly.

"This ring," he answered, "which you have so often slipped on to your own finger, let me put it on your hand now, and wear it for the sake of what might have been. Nay, I do not wish to trouble or frighten you, my darling. Do not turn away from me."

"I am not afraid of you," she answered, giving him her hand, which he held in his own for a moment or two as he tried the ring upon her fingers, wondering all the while if it could be true that he was shut in there—in the small, sunny, silent garden—with no one near to him but Hester, and yet that for his very life he dare not press to his lips the small hand on which he left his ring. Hester was looking at him, not at it.

"Now," he said, pushing back his disordered hair from his burning forehead, "let me tell you all that I have to say to you. Sit down here beside me, for I have very much to say."

She sat down at his side on a bank of turf under one of the walls; and he told her all that had befallen him from the moment when Lawson's mother summoned him and Grant to the help of Rose. He spoke very mournfully of his little child.

"I am very sorry for you," sobbed Hester, laying her hand, upon which glistened his ring, on his arm.

"I must go home to-morrow," he said; "and you, Hester, when shall you come?"

"I don't know," she answered; "my father and I have talked about it these three days, but he cannot resolve to return to the old life. You see how changed he is? How could he go back to his gloomy work, which is no real work at all, but a dreary idleness? Yet we must go back some time."

"You wish to come home?" he said.

"Oh, with all my heart!" cried Hester, clasping her hands with girlish earnestness.

"Hester," he said, "I am much older than you. You may speak to me as you would speak to my father, or yours. Do you love Carl Bramwell?"

"Yes," she whispered, her face flushing into a deep crimson.

"God bless you both!" said Robert, after a moment's pause. "You will be very happy. Yes, you must come again, and it must be soon. Leave it to me, Hester. Do not be troubled at your father staying here a while longer."

He loitered yet a few minutes, with Hester beside

him, but neither of them said many words. Then she walked step by step with him down the soft garden walk, and through the house, standing at the door to look after him as he went his lonely way down the street.

He turned once to see her, and lifted his hat to her, with a forced smile, which she was too far off to catch.

"It is very hard upon me!" he said to himself with a groan.

END OF CHAPTER THE FORTY-FIFTH.

GOVERNMENT SITUATIONS AND HOW TO GET THEM.

BY FRANCIS GEORGE HEATH, AUTHOR OF "THE 'ROMANCE' OF PEASANT LIFE," ETC.

IN TWO PARTS.—PART THE FIRST.



HOW to get into the Civil Service? is probably a question that is now being asked by thousands of parents solicitous concerning the future career of their sons, and by thousands also of young men anxious themselves to make a start in life. Government situations have always been much in request; but, until within the last two or three years, their possession has been restricted to the nominees of influential persons. Even now, with the principle of "open" competition for these situations in operation, all restrictions to the free admission of candidates to the Civil Service have not been removed; but a step—we may, in fact, fairly say a stride—in the right direction has been made, and it is quite certain that public opinion will not permit any future administration to recede from the position which has thus been taken up in reference to the new mode of appointment to the public offices.

There is, we think, little doubt that a great future is in store for the Civil Service; but reform in its present constitution is urgently needed; as, notwithstanding the great improvements which have been effected within the last twenty years, there is still very much that requires amendment. The entire reconstruction of the Government offices will, in all probability, prove a work of time. In that work and its result, however, the public—more especially that large section of the public having sons to educate and to provide for—are directly concerned.

Hence, any information relating to the Civil Service at the present time is likely to be interesting, because the exclusive patronage system is in great part abolished, and although not yet entirely

swept away, has nevertheless been doomed, and will ere long be reckoned with the things of the past. Strange to say, however, although there are, as we have said, thousands of parents and thousands of sons desirous of knowing all about Government situations and how to get them, the sources of information are not so numerous—at least, in a comprehensive form—as might be supposed; and a great deal of ignorance and misapprehension very generally prevails concerning the public offices and all that relates to their internal economy. This ignorance is shared even by Parliament, a proof of which is furnished in the fact that the past session has been fruitful of committees of inquiry into the administration of the Government offices.

The House of Commons, on the motion of Mr. Vernon Harcourt, appointed a committee charged with the duty of ascertaining whether the Civil Service is or is not conducted upon really economical principles; that is to say, whether the nation gets an adequate return in service for the money which that service annually costs. On the motion of Mr. John Holms, the House of Commons appointed another committee to make inquiry into our annual expenditure for stores. This particular committee is to find out whether we, as a nation—or rather those who manage our affairs for us—are good housekeepers, and purchase our national provisions in the best markets and in the most advantageous manner. Mr. Otway also has presided over a committee appointed to inquire into the grievances of "writers," who constitute a numerically important section of the non-permanent Civil Service. A commission, appointed by the Government during the Parliamentary session of last year, has also prosecuted inquiries concerning the grounds for the alleged grievances of members of the Civil Service living in Ireland; and its report presented in due course was afterwards made the subject of a

Parliamentary debate, followed by a division, in which the Government were beaten.

It is not our intention, and it would be quite beside the particular purpose which we have in view, to enter into any discussion in this place as to the several reasons, whether well or ill founded, which have given rise to the apparently general demand for inquiry into Civil Service administration. We merely instance these facts because they serve partly to explain how it is that the Civil Service has attracted so much attention of late, and because also they indicate the possibility of a complete and entire reorganisation of the Government departments at no distant date. In this article, however, we can only deal with the circumstances of the time, and present the Civil Service to our readers in its actual condition. The subject is one that daily increases in interest, and we believe that some information with regard to it will be welcomed by a large section of our readers.

We may briefly describe the Civil Service as consisting of all persons who, not being in the army or navy, are appointed directly or indirectly by the central executive Government, and whose salaries or wages are paid out of money annually voted by Parliament. Besides those who are included in this general designation, there are numbers of others who are employed by local authorities, and paid partly or wholly out of local rates. We do not include such persons in the category of Civil Servants proper; but, excluding these, there is still left a large army of officials, numbering over 80,000, who are employed in carrying out the details of administrative Government, and who range in rank from the Premier down to messengers, dockyard labourers, and other subordinate officials. Now reducing this immense number of public servants by excluding, at the one end, Cabinet ministers, political heads of departments, and other great officers of State, whose appointments are made by the political party for the time being in power, and at the other end cutting off the lowest grades of the service, filled by persons whose duties are merely mechanical, there is still left a really large body of Government servants recruited from the respectable and intelligent portion of the community, and called upon in the fulfilment of their daily duties to exercise judgment, discretion, and ability.

It is evident that a profession which requires the exercise of these qualities is an eminently respectable one; in fact, the service of the country has always been considered an honourable calling, and it is this fact which has exerted a powerful influence in attracting young men of family and position into the Civil Service, notwithstanding that the pay and prospects are inferior as a rule to those which may be secured in the professions of the law and of medicine. Even, however, in a pecuniary point of

view, the Civil Service offers better prospects than can be obtained—at least as the reward of “patient merit” alone—in the church, the army, and the navy.

It is not, of course, the mere pay which serves as an inducement to young men of ability to enter the Government service, because, as we have inferred, that service is notoriously, at present, a poorly paid profession. But Civil Servants enjoy numerous and solid advantages of a peculiar kind. The first of these advantages is found in the general permanency of Government situations. It must, of course, be understood that we are now speaking of what is called the established section of the service, and we do not include “writers,” and other extra or temporary officers. The established clerk in a Government department, when once he has passed the ordeal of the Civil Service Commission, actually received his appointment, and entered on duty, has usually his situation in his own hands, and rarely loses it unless by his own fault. Recent economical reforms have, however, had a tendency in their actual operation upon Civil Servants to undermine somewhat the stability even of established Government situations; and cases have occurred in which young men in an established capacity have been compelled to retire from the service, in order to conduce to the effectual carrying out of the policy of “Economy and Retrenchment.” But successful remonstrance has been sometimes made against proposals to make reductions in the *personnel* of the Government departments; and as a rule Civil Servants have generally been able to secure Parliamentary support when their “vested interests” have been attacked.

The right to superannuation is another great privilege enjoyed by Civil Servants; and perhaps it is that particular privilege which acts as the strongest inducement for young men to enter the Civil Service. The question of superannuation, however, is one that is not thoroughly understood by the public. So far, at least, as those now in the service are concerned, it is an inalienable right, secured by Act of Parliament; and it is scarcely likely that any future legislature would permit its abrogation, for the reason that it has proved of solid advantage to the public service. Every established Civil Servant who has served the State continuously for a period of ten years would, if incapacitated at the end of this term, by illness or in any other way, from performing future service, be entitled upon retirement to receive ten-sixtieths or one-sixth of his salary at the time of retirement, as a pension payable during the remainder of his life. Eleven years’ service entitles to eleven-sixtieths—the computation is always by sixtieths—of the salary; and each subsequent year of service gives the right to an additional sixtieth, up to a maximum of forty-sixtieths or two-thirds of the retiring salary.

Superannuation allowances to retiring officers do not exceed, except in special cases, two-thirds of the salary or emoluments of the officers at the time of retirement.

When, however, departmental reconstructions absolutely require that the services of permanent officers should be dispensed with, the Treasury is bound, under the provisions of the Superannuation Act of 1859, to add a number of years to the actual term of service in computing the amount of the pension.

In the reconstruction, for instance, of the Customs department some time since, one year was added as compensation in the case of those who had been between one and five years in the service. To those between five and ten years' service, three years were added. To those who had served between ten and fifteen years, an addition of five years was made. Seven years were added to the service of persons of between fifteen and twenty years' service, and ten years in the case of those of twenty years' service and upwards.

In the case, therefore, of an established clerk in a Government office, who after twenty years' continuous service is compelled to retire from his department in order to facilitate a reduction of the numbers on the clerical staff, he would, under the Superannuation Act of 1859, be entitled to have a period of ten years added to his actual service in computing his retiring allowance. This would enable him to receive as pension thirty-sixtieths or one-half of his pay at the time of retirement. If he had actually served thirty years, he would secure for life forty-sixtieths or two-thirds of his retiring salary. In special cases where peculiar or professional qualifications are required from Civil Servants, of a kind not ordinarily to be acquired in the public service, the Treasury are empowered by the Act of 1859 to grant an additional allowance of years in computing the retiring salary. But the additional allowance must not exceed twenty years, so that the pension may not be more than sixty-sixtieths, or full pay. The list of those who are entitled to these special rates of compensation includes under-secretaries of State, solicitors to public departments, police and stipendiary magistrates, the chief commissioner of police, medical officers attached to the Privy Council, and others. For special and professional qualifications, the Treasury are empowered to add to the actual service an extra period not exceeding seven years in the case of, amongst others, legal assistants in some of the public departments, directors of convict prisons, commissioners of police, medical men employed in the Civil Service (when they give their whole time to the service), poor-law inspectors, and inspectors of factories, mines, prisons, and reformatories. In the case of Government chaplains of convict prisons, inspectors of schools, and some others, the Treasury

can award at their discretion an additional allowance of five years.

At one time Civil Servants were annually mulcted of a portion of their salaries, in aid of what was termed the "Superannuation Fund." Five per cent. was deducted from salaries which were over £100 a year, and 2½ per cent. was taken from salaries which were less than that amount. The Superannuation Fund, however, was a myth. It existed only in imagination. The per-centage upon Civil Service salaries was swept into the general exchequer, and it was calculated that the amount annually deducted in this way, in aid of the so-called Superannuation Fund, was greatly in excess of what would have been required for a real fund. After being maintained, however, for a long period, the superannuation tax was finally abolished by Act of Parliament in 1857.

The late Lord Mayo, then Lord Naas, was the champion of Civil Servants in the House of Commons on that occasion, and he succeeded in carrying his measure for repealing the iniquitous tax—for it has always been looked on as an unjust and odious impost—in spite of the determined opposition of the Government of Lord Palmerston. Two years subsequently to the repeal of the superannuation tax, namely in 1859, the Superannuation Act to which we have already referred was passed by Parliament; and at the present time, the pension or retiring allowance of a Civil Servant is paid free from any kind of deduction.

Amongst the other advantages connected with Government situations, are unusually short hours of daily labour and liberal periods of annual leave. Six hours of daily attendance, either from ten to four or from eleven to five o'clock, are by no means calculated to unduly tax the strength of a Civil Servant. These are the hours of attendance in most of the Government departments, and they are less in number than in the great majority of private offices. The periods of annual leave which are allowed in the Civil Service vary in different departments, and according to the rank of the officers. The annual leave allowed to subordinate officers is in many cases only about a fortnight, in some instances only a week. But in the case of clerks who are recruited from competitive examinations, periods for relaxation of from four to eight weeks annually are allowed, whilst the annual leave of the clerks and officers employed in the Houses of Parliament considerably exceeds even the maximum period which has been named. It will be seen, therefore, that there are many privileges connected with the Civil Service calculated to render it attractive. It only remains to point out the means by which Civil Service situations can be obtained by those who are desirous of securing them.

THE SAILOR'S DREAM.



"WITH JACK AND NAN UPON MY KNEE."

BY THE AUTHOR OF "SONGS FOR SAILORS," ETC.



UR port we make, I jump ashore,
For weeks to walk a watch no more,
And home I push, and, at the door,
I catch and buss my Nancy ;

A jiffy—I am snug at tea,
With Jack and Nan upon my knee ;
And am I really home from sea ?
Yes, there sits my own Nancy.

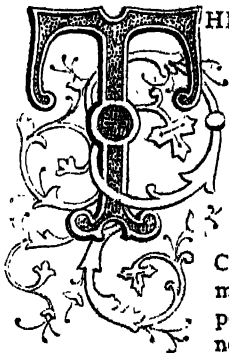
How many a time by day, by night;
 I'd fancied this before my sight,
 All of us in this warm firelight;
 And is it real, my Nancy?
 Yes, here I see the firelight play
 On all I've seen long leagues away;
 Now God be thanked for this, I say,
 That here I sit with Nancy.

I rub my eyes—what is that shout?
 "Up to your watch! come, tumble out!
 And is it but a dream about
 My Jack and Nan, and Nancy?
 Yes, here I'm on my watch alone;
 Well, all that in my dream was shown,
 Thank God, some hour will be my own,
 And I shall be with Nancy!"

GOVERNMENT SITUATIONS AND HOW TO GET THEM.

BY FRANCIS GEORGE HEATH, AUTHOR OF "THE 'ROMANCE' OF PEASANT LIFE," ETC.

IN TWO PARTS.—PART THE SECOND.



HERE is now no royal road to Government situations, so far as the great bulk of them are concerned. No nominations are required, and no Treasury or Parliamentary interest need be secured by candidates for the public service. The path of employment, under the Crown lies open to every young man who, being eligible for appointment and possessing the necessary ability, chooses to follow it. Immense reforms have within the last twenty years been brought about in the mode of admission to public offices; but no change in the Civil Service equal in importance to the inauguration of the system of open competition has taken place within recent years.

Formerly Government situations were made use of for the worst kinds of jobbery and corruption. They were in fact so many bribes by which the Government for the time being secured the allegiance of its followers. A candidate's fitness or unfitness for any particular appointment had nothing to do with his selection for it. It was quite enough that he was the friend or relative of some one whom the Government of the day desired to serve. Thus it came to pass that the public offices became filled with the most ignorant and incompetent persons, even "the halt, the lame, and the blind;" it really mattered not what they were in those "good old times."

But all this was destined to be changed; and the institution of the Civil Service Commission, by an order in Council dated the 21st of May, 1855, marked the commencement of a new era in the history of the Civil Service. The preamble of this Order in Council set forth the principles which were thenceforth to guide the selection of candidates to fill situations under the Crown. It ran thus:—
 'Whereas it is expedient to make provision for testing, according to fixed rules, the qualifications of

the young men who may from time to time be proposed to be appointed to the junior situations in any of Her Majesty's Civil Establishments." The order then proceeded to appoint three Commissioners to carry out its provisions, which were that, from its date, the said Commissioners should cause every candidate for junior appointments in the Government service to be examined, and that no candidate should be appointed to the public service until he had received a certificate of proficiency from the Civil Service Commissioners. The Commissioners were, however, before granting a certificate to any candidate, to ascertain first whether he was within the limits of age prescribed for the department to which he desired to be admitted; next, whether he was free from any physical defect or disease calculated to interfere with the proper discharge of his duties as a public servant. Thirdly, whether his character was such as to warrant his appointment; and fourthly, whether he possessed the requisite knowledge and ability to enable him properly to fill the office he sought to obtain. The institution of the Civil Service Commission did not do away with the nomination or patronage system. It only secured the nomination of competent persons, or rather it prevented incompetent nominees from gaining admission—as had previously been the custom—to the public offices. At first, candidates were nominated singly for examination as vacancies arose. But this plan ultimately gave place to a system of limited competition, by which two or three candidates—generally three—were nominated for each vacancy. Under this system the patronage of the Government was multiplied, but at the same time the constitution of the Civil Service was improved, because it was found that the young men who won their way to success in a competition were, as might be supposed, superior to those who merely passed at a private examination.

But a great and important change was looming in the distance; and it is to Professor Fawcett that belongs the credit of having made the first attempt

to throw open the Civil Service, without restriction of any kind, to all comers who should be eligible for appointment; and the result to which this attempt finally led will be a lasting monument in honour of its originator. At the beginning of the Parliamentary session of 1869, Professor Fawcett brought forward a motion in the House of Commons to throw open to public competition the appointments in the Civil Service. On that occasion the learned professor was opposed by the Government, and on pressing his motion to a division was beaten by a very small majority.

In the following year Professor Fawcett again brought forward his motion, the object of which was anticipated by the Government, who declared their intention of throwing open the Civil Service, subject to certain reservations. On the 4th of June in the same year—1870—an Order in Council was accordingly promulgated, declaring that with certain exceptions, to be afterwards named, all appointments which it might be necessary to make after the 31st of August, 1870, should be "open to all persons (of the requisite age, health, character, and other qualifications prescribed in the said regulations) who may be desirous of attending the same, subject to the payment of such fees as the said Civil Service Commissioners, with the consent of the said Commissioners of Her Majesty's Treasury, may from time to time require."

To give some idea of the number of situations which have thus been yielded up for the free access of the public, untrammelled by the necessity of asking any favour of influential persons, it may be stated that the junior appointments to clerkships in the following offices are included among those to which the principle of open competition applies:—The Treasury, the Privy Council Office, the Colonial Office, the India and War Offices, the departments of the Admiralty, the Board of Trade, and the Poor Law Board, the Privy Seal Office, the Customs, the Inland Revenue department, the Paymaster-General's department, the Civil Service Commission, the General Post Office (clerks in the Secretary's department), the Mint, the Exchequer and Audit department, the General Register Office, the Office of Works and the Office of Woods, the National Debt and the Public Record departments, the Stationery Office, the Charity Commission, the Education Office, and a number of smaller departments.

Previous to the introduction of open competition, the subjects of examination for the several departments of the Civil Service were greatly varied, and they were arranged so as to meet the supposed requirements of each. There was, however, no sort of necessity for the great diversities which existed, because the actual nature of the work in the public offices did not vary in anything like the same proportion. The necessity for greater uniformity has,

however, been recognised in the scheme which has been adopted for carrying out the principle of open competition. Clerkships and similar appointments are therefore divided, under the "open" scheme, into two groups, named respectively Class I. and Class II. For each of the two groups there is a separate examination. The wisdom of this division may, we think, be questioned; but it would be foreign to our present purpose to enter into any discussion on this point. Class II. includes the great bulk of the junior clerkships in the Civil Service, whilst Class I. is intended to apply only to the higher appointments. In each case a preliminary test examination must be passed before candidates are eligible to compete for appointments.

For appointments under Class I., candidates who fulfil the conditions as to health and character, required by the Civil Service Commissioners, may compete, provided that "their age on the first day of the examination will not be less than eighteen, or more than twenty-four." Candidates, before attending the preliminary examination, are required to pay a fee of £1, and a further fee of £5 before proceeding to compete, should they have passed the ordeal of a preliminary test, which includes handwriting, orthography, arithmetic (to vulgar and decimal fractions), and English composition. In the final competition, candidates will be examined in the following subjects, for which marks in the order in which we have placed them will be given:—English composition (including *précis* writing), 500 marks; history of England (including that of the laws and constitution), 500 marks; English language and literature, 500 marks; the language, literature, and history of Greece, Rome, France, Germany, and Italy, for each of the first two of which marks to the number of 750 will be given, whilst for each of the last three 375 marks will be given; mathematics, pure and mixed, 1,250 marks; natural science (including chemistry, electricity and magnetism, geology and mineralogy, zoology and botany), 1,000 marks; the moral sciences, that is, logic and mental and moral philosophy, 500 marks; jurisprudence, 375 marks; and political economy, 375 marks. None of these subjects are obligatory; but, of course, those who are the most proficient in the greatest number of them will win.

It is, however, requisite, in order to obtain any marks for a particular subject, that *competent knowledge* of the subject should be exhibited. The successful candidates choose their positions from amongst the vacancies for which they compete, in the order in which they stand in the competition.

For the open examination for Civil Service appointments under Class II., we find the list of "qualifications" is not nearly so formidable. For these examinations the Commissioners require a fee of 10s. from candidates for the preliminary examination, and a further fee of £1 before proceeding

to the open competition. Candidates for Class II. must be between sixteen and twenty years of age. The preliminary test examination is in handwriting, orthography, and arithmetic (to vulgar and decimal fractions). The subjects for open competition under Class II. are—handwriting, for proficiency in which 400 marks are apportioned; orthography and arithmetic, each 400 marks. The maximum of 200 marks is also given for each of the remaining subjects on the list—namely, copying MS. (to test accuracy), indexing or docketing, digesting returns into summaries, English composition, geography, English history, and book-keeping.

In their last report, the Civil Service Commissioners stated that up to that time only one competition under Class I. had been held. This took place on the 23rd of January, 1872.

The number of vacancies competed for was ten, consisting of three clerkships in the India Office, two in the Lunacy Commission, two in the English Record Office, two in the Irish Record Office, and one in the Civil Service Commission. There were 142 candidates for these appointments, of whom sixty-one only were found capable of passing the test examination. Of these sixty-one, again, only twenty-two finally appeared to compete; so that there were about two candidates for each vacancy.

In the first four competitions which were held under Class II., there were ninety-five situations offered. Of the candidates who presented themselves there were, however, no less than 446 who could not pass the preliminary test examination. Of those who did pass, the number was 374, or about four candidates for each vacancy, a proportion of candidates to vacancies by no means large.

We have endeavoured to place before our readers some idea of what Government situations are, and of the means presented under the system of open competition for gaining access to them. The salaries for junior clerkships in most of the public departments commence at £80 or £90, in some cases at £100 a year, and increase annually by increments

of, in some cases, £10, and in others £15. In most of the departments the clerical staff is split up into classes, each class having a minimum and a maximum salary, with an annual rise from the former to the latter. In some cases promotion is very slow; in others it is more rapid. Every junior established clerk does not rise to the highest posts on the permanent staff of his department, but he is eligible for those posts should "the flow of promotion" lead him up to them. He must, of course, take "the chances of war." There are to be found in the Civil Service many men of ability who, nevertheless, have not after long periods of service succeeded in rising to the top of the tree. The salaries range in the several departments, including the chiefs, from about £2,000 a year downwards. The actual system of pay, however, prevailing in the Civil Service is in a most anomalous state, and greatly needs reform. Salaries are split up and arranged in an almost infinite variety of ways, not at all warranted by the difference between the various kinds of work to be done, or by the difference in the nature of the responsibilities incurred.

From all that we have said, it will be seen that there is room for great changes in the constitution of the Civil Service. It should, as we think, be reorganised upon one uniform basis, with all its several departments amalgamated under one system, with one scale of pay, rising by duly regulated instalments from a lower to a higher limit. There should be one examination for all candidates for admission, with no restriction and no retention of highly paid offices in the hands of the executive Government; so that the path to the highest situations under the Crown would be opened to every young man of ability who might be eligible to seek them under fair and equitable regulations. The Civil Service of this country would then be an institution of which the nation might be proud, and it would offer a splendid field for the exercise of the highest talents. The day, we trust, is not far distant when a reform of this nature will be attempted and carried out. Meanwhile we commend the subject to the attention of our readers.

N E L L Y.

IN May, when meads were studded with fair
flowers,

Our baby came;

God's gift, an angel sent to cheer the hours;

Nelly her name.

Hearts throbbed to greet the little stranger's birth;

All nature wore

A brighter aspect; and seemed round our hearth

A richer store.

Winter! his fingers held in icy grip

The wee white hand;

His chilly breath passed o'er the rosy lip,

And the firm band

That knit three loving souls together snapped.

'Tis mine to tell

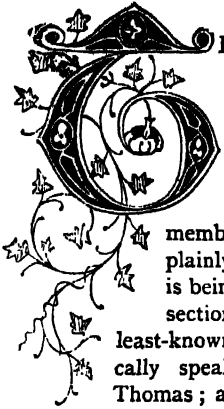
The blow Death dealt when in his robe he wrapped

Our darling Nell.

GEORGE STRONACH, M.A.

IN WONDER-WORLD.

BY J. E. TAYLOR.



THE occasional information we receive of the doings of the *Challenger*, whether through the semi-scientific communications of newspaper correspondents, or the more official and trustworthy letters of some member of the expedition, tells us plainly of the excellent work that is being done. Already a submarine section has been carried across the least-known part of the Atlantic, zoologically speaking — from Madeira to St. Thomas; and after a short rest at New York, it was intended to trace another section from the Bermudas to Madeira, thus thoroughly working this important tract of sea-bottom. The attention of savans in all countries is being minutely directed, we may say, to every haul of the dredge. The naturalists on board are men who can readily appreciate the scientific value even of creatures they were not prepared to find, and who can also throw out philosophical hints as to how they came thither. The reader will therefore see the great benefits which science must derive from these questions being so exhaustively worked.

And, indeed, it is with no little wonder, tempered with something approaching to awe, that we follow the doings of the *Challenger*. We are asked to conceive of sea-depths it is almost impossible to realise, and we get glimpses of the geological operations going on there, and of the queerly associated organic life at the bottom, that utterly set at naught the "zones of depth" which naturalists hitherto have rather too strenuously supported. Professor Wyville-Thomson holds that we are still living in the "Cretaceous period," and however we may disagree from him, it is certain that the present deeper parts of the great Atlantic must have been sea at that distant era! For there is no more dependable law in the relation of physical geography to geology than that shallow seas have been formed within a comparatively recent period, and that the deeper seas date back to a higher antiquity.

The depth of the Atlantic between the Canary Islands and the West Indies is something awful. A pretty level bottom runs right away, as the section just taken by the *Challenger* shows, from the African islands to the American ones, gradually deepening to nearly 19,000 feet! At this spot we might sink the highest point of the Alps, and still have nearly half a mile of sea-water covering it.

Perhaps some of our readers will remember that the best dredger of the last generation, Professor

Edward Forbes, believed that marine life could not well exist at a greater depth than about 1,800 or 2,000 feet, owing not only to the great pressure, but more especially to the absence of light. The idea as to pressure was erroneous, for the science of hydrostatics shows us that in water it must be equal in all directions, and therefore unfelt. We ourselves bear a barometrical pressure of fourteen pounds on every square inch of our bodies, but who feels it? So long as the pressure inside is equivalent to that outside, there is no experience of the fact. Still, it must be borne in mind that the physical frame of any animal requires adjusting to the pressure, not because the latter is externally overbearing, but on account of the delicate structure of the blood and other vessels that have been formed with a view to bearing a certain unfelt pressure. Hence it is that when men ascend in balloons to a great height, and thereby lessen the weight of the atmospherical column to which the human body is normally adjusted, the removal of the weight is painfully experienced in the blood coursing more rapidly through the veins, as well as by the lungs being unable to take in the necessary quantity of oxygen at every inspiration. Bleeding at the nostrils and ears, and faintness, follow this removal from those conditions where the atmospheric pressure is adjusted to the physiological mechanism, to others where it is not so.

Much the same sort of thing occurs in the depths of the sea, for the water is only a medium of a denser kind. So far, therefore, Professor Forbes was right, in holding that marine objects fitted to live in shallow water could not survive in the deeper parts, where the pressure was much greater. It will therefore be plainly seen how absolutely unable marine creatures are to migrate from one part to another, unless the physical conditions are the same, or the animals fitted to bear the strains put on them by the difference. In the latter case, the alteration would be equivalent to the formation of new species.

And yet it is a well-known zoological fact that we have living on the coasts of North America, as well as along our own, certain species of shell-fish which are exactly alike. The sand-mussel is a good example, selected from many others. It is quite as plentiful in the muddy sea-bed off New York as it is along our own eastern coasts. Its geological antiquity, it is true, is very great, dating from before the Glacial epoch. During the latter period we have undeniable proof of Great Britain having been submerged to a depth of nearly 2,000 feet below the present sea-level; and there is every

reason to believe that a large portion of North America, in the same latitudes, was then similarly affected. The present relations of land and sea are the result of subsequent processes, slowly carried on, during which it is not difficult to see how a species of mollusc like the sand-mussel might keep pace with the physical changes, until at their close it would be found living under similar conditions so far asunder as the two shores of the shallower parts of the Atlantic.

We mention this circumstance, inasmuch as the mode of zoological reasoning here followed may be more or less applied to every species of marine objects. Some of them have an antiquity undoubtedly vast, as for instance the lamp-shells, of which one genus (*Lingula*) is met with in the fossil state from the oldest rocks to the most recent, and is still living in widely separated areas of the present seas; thus showing that it has had a continuous existence ever since that geological epoch known as the Cambrian.

Whenever such ancient life-forms have been able to live under the same physical conditions, little or no alteration has taken place in their structure. But we have abundant evidence of the changes which may be wrought in individuals of the same species or genus, when the physical conditions have continued different to what they are elsewhere for long periods of time. For instance, in the waters of the celebrated "Mammoth Cave," in Kentucky, there exist fishes similar to those of the neighbouring rivers in every respect but their eyes, which are *sightless*, and have been reduced to a rudimentary condition from their disuse. The subterranean rivers which flow beneath the limestone regions of Pennsylvania, Tennessee, and Alabama are tenanted by fishes in a similar condition. The cray-fishes, spiders, centipedes, etc., found in these caves are also sightless; thus showing how similarity of conditions, as regards vision, have resulted in various species of creatures having been reduced to the same state of general blindness. Not only in the American caves, but in those of Austria and elsewhere, it is not uncommon to find animals in a state of abnormal blindness. In some instances the eyes have been reduced to the most rudimentary of structures.

Let us see how these examples may be applied to a better understanding of one of the animals brought up from the deep-sea-bottom by the *Challenger*. In a former article we have already noticed the discovery of a crustacean possessing eyes in every respect resembling those of the ancient *Trilobites*—a type of vision which was believed to have long ago passed away. Now we have to study an allied crustacean with no eyes at all! It is a new genus, allied to our spiny cray-fish (*Palinurus*). Eight of the ten feet were edged with a yellowish-white fringe, which made them look very much like

the "swimming-feet" of some of our deeper-sea-crabs. The claws, or fore-feet, were very long and slender, indeed of a length greater than that of the entire body. But the most noticeable feature about this creature—or rather noticeable for *want* of a feature—was the total absence of eyes.

In crabs and lobsters, the eyes are usually borne on movable stalks, which can be directed to any point. They are compound in their structure, but covered with a transparent coat that makes them appear single. In the case of one species of crustacean met with by Dr. Carpenter and Professor Wyville-Thomson, during their previous deep-sea dredgings, called *Ethusa*, it was found that specimens obtained from shallow water possessed well-developed eyes; specimens of the same animal found in deeper water, to as great a depth as 2,000 feet, were apparently blind, the eyes being covered with a "cataract" in the shape of a calcareous coat; whilst other specimens obtained from a depth still greater, say from over 4,000 feet, were found with eye-stalks not only without eyes, but fixed and immovable, from the disuse of the muscles that were only serviceable when they could direct the eye-stalks so as to make them useful.

In the new species dredged up by the *Challenger* from the depth of above 11,000 feet, and which has been named *Deidamia*, there is no trace whatever either of eye-stalks or eyes. The only way of accounting for this singular fact is that at such a depth there must be next to absolute darkness. The deep-sea-bed is unlighted by the rays of the sun, and is never illuminated except perhaps by the occasional phosphorescent glow of some marine organism. Of the changes which have occurred since the ancestors of this blind crustacean lived in shallower water, we cannot even conjecture. But this very adaptation to the abnormal circumstances under which it was met with, tells to the philosophical naturalist a silent yet eloquent tale of its long antiquity, as well as of its powers of physical endurance.

This is not the only marine organism which has recently been made known to the scientific world by the naturalists of the *Challenger* expedition. Not far from Teneriffe, when the dredge had been paid out to the depth of 16,000 feet, it was hauled up with two hundredweight of marine mud in it. This mud consisted chiefly of the accumulated microscopic shells of foraminifera—creatures of the very lowest class, but having the power of secreting minute limy shells, which, when the speck of jelly that formed them dies, gather on the sea-bed. Our English chalk was originally formed in this way, as a microscopical examination of its structure plainly shows. Nay, the same species of foraminifer (*Globigerina*) met with so abundantly in our chalk as to form, at least, two-thirds of its bulk, is still living in the deeper

parts of the Atlantic, and there forming a limey ooze that will some day be undoubtedly chalk-rock. No wonder, therefore, that Professor Thomson thinks the "Cretaceous period" is not yet over.

Among the mud thus brought up by the *Challenger* dredge were the ear-bones of fishes, and the small shells of those oceanic molluscs called *ptero-pods*, on which, in arctic regions, the whale is known to feed. But the object which the keen eyes of the naturalists immediately singled out was a marine worm, mangled by the dredge, it is true, but still possessing characters which marked it as "new." It has since been described by Dr. Willmoes-Suhm, and, lowly organised though it be, has been found to be distinguished by such features as to form a kind of "missing link" between two well-known but distinct groups of sea-worms. This singular organism has been christened *Leioderma*. About fifty miles to the west of the place where this creature was hauled up, another sounding was made, at a depth of over 9,000 feet. The ground here was found hard and unproductive; and, as will be seen by the decreased depth, it is evident the investigators had struck an elevated submarine ridge. A sounding taken the day following proved this, for the depth was found to be above 13,000 feet, although not twenty miles away. On this occasion, among other objects, there were brought up some small branches of that kind of coral to which the well-known and highly-valued "red coral" of commerce belongs. Some of the branches, or rather the stumps, were an inch in diameter, the compact central portion being pure white, whilst the exterior was a glossy black. The naturalists, in mentioning this circumstance, throw out the hint that this coral, which had evidently been dead a long time, may have lived at a less depth originally, and been carried to its present position by a subsidence of the sea-bottom.

Many evidences of volcanic action also brought up by the dredge over the same area, lend a colouring to this hypothesis. However interesting even this possible relic of former geographical conditions may be, it does not equal that associated with an object of quite a different character found attached to it. This was a living specimen of a new genus of sponges of the class known as siliceous, on account of the spicules being formed of silica. The now well-known "Venus' Flower-basket" is a good example of the group in question.

Professor Thomson described this new sponge, which was found attached to the branches of dead coral, as having the appearance of the "tinder-fungus," which may so frequently be seen adhering to the trunk of a tree. The surfaces of this sponge, which has been named *Poliopogon*—two Greek words implying its resemblance to a white beard—were covered with a delicate network of square meshes. The above name, however, is more

directly applied to the fringe, or rather brush, of strong, glassy, anchoring spicules, resembling those which have given to another well-known siliceous sponge the name of the "Glass-ropes." Even the young, or "gemmules," of this lovely deep-sea object were met with, also adhering to the smaller branches of the coral just referred to. On the principle of "greater fleas" having "lesser fleas" upon them, the *Poliopogon* had attached to it two specimens of a deep-sea-worm, called *Euphrosyne*, of a species entirely new to science.

Not only have these dredging researches brought up some curious and generally interesting objects, and thus far enriched zoological science; they have thrown no little light on geological processes as well. The "Father of Modern Geology," Sir Charles Lyell, has devoted his life to advocating the principle that geological phenomena can only be thoroughly understood in proportion as we know more of existing physical geographical operations. How correct he has been is proved by the fact that in proportion as geologists have attended to this really Baconian principle, have been their successes. Hence, even geologists are no less interested than zoologists in such fresh information as the *Challenger* researches shall yield. Fortunately, Professor Wyville-Thomson is as good and reputable a geologist as he is a naturalist, and therefore we may expect to have the most made of every discovery in this direction. Thus, in about lat. 24°, long. 23° to 24°, near the place marked on any good globe as crossed by Captain Cook's expedition in 1771, a series of most interesting soundings took place. One of these brought up from a depth of at least 10,000 feet three different kinds of molluscs belonging to genera usually regarded as arctic. It should be noted that the temperature at these great depths is very low, and therefore of an arctic character. On these occasions it was usually about two degrees Centigrade.

One especial sounding is important as bearing upon a controversy now going on in geological circles. Professor Ramsay, the Director of the Geological Survey of Great Britain, and some others of almost equal eminence, maintain that all the primary and secondary rocks, especially sandstones, which are of a red colour, were deposited, not along the bottoms of seas, but on those of great fresh-water lakes. The old red sandstone, especially, has its strata assigned to such an origin, and its few fossils are supposed to bear out this idea. But on the occasion above referred to, the dredge constantly came up laden with red or ochreous-coloured ooze. The depth was about 19,000 feet, one of the greatest yet attained, and here the bottom was found to be composed of smooth red clay, containing hardly a trace of organic matter, and that only of the most lowly organised forms.

On another occasion, in the same locality, the dredge was paid out to a depth of over 21,000 feet, and came up charged with one hundred-weight of red clay. This haul, Professor Thomson remarked, interested all the naturalists on board; for it was the deepest sounding by several hundreds of fathoms that had as yet been made, and it seemed strange that, coincident with these greater depths, there should be such a marked difference in the material of the sea-bed. The microscope showed that the red ooze contained only a small proportion of foraminifera; and this was borne out by chemical analysis, which indicated but a small per-centage of living matter.

The clayey mud is described as exceedingly fine, and therefore such as may have been held in mechanical suspension by the water for many days. It looked in colour and consistency exactly like chocolate, and had quite a smooth feel when rubbed by the fingers. The colouring matter was found, on chemical examination, to be due to the presence of iron, just as it invariably is in the red rocks both of the primary and secondary formations. Professor Thomson is inclined to assign the origin of this red mud to the relative contiguity of the South American rivers, some of which are known to carry their muddy waters to sea for a considerable distance. Thus, the waters of the Amazons can be seen discolouring the sea-water for more than 300 miles from land, and it is possible that the finer sediments are carried many hundred miles further out to sea before they eventually reach the bottom to rest there. Such rivers as the Senegal, also, which pours its waters into the sea in nearly the same latitude as where the above soundings were taken, may have equally contributed to the origin of the red mud, and thus the great streams

on both sides the Atlantic may be at work influencing the sea-floor between them. Anyhow, it seems imperative that geologists shall give up the "Lake theory" for the necessary formation of red rocks. The siliceous and clayey nature of the ooze in question plainly shows its sedimentary character, and testifies to its having been brought by the mechanical action of water alone.

Subsequently, on the 11th of March, a still deeper sounding was made, in about 19° north lat., and 55° west long., the enormous depth of *five* statute miles being reached! Again the dredge came up laden with red mud, similarly barren in animal life, the only form being a tube-building sea-worm, of a new species. These had formed their tubes, like the *Terebella* of our own coasts, out of the particles of coarser mud on the sea-floor. The depth from which these creatures came seems very unfavourable to animal life generally, and yet the nearest allies of this deep-sea-worm are species characterised by living in *shallow* water elsewhere—another suggestion as to the modifications which have taken place in the structure and habits of marine organisms. This was the last zoological "find" of any value, for shortly afterwards land was hailed, and the first transatlantic submarine section completed.

It will be seen, therefore, that the course of the exploring expedition from Madeira to St. Thomas was first just outside the boundary of the northern tropic, and afterwards as closely within it.

The thermometers employed to ascertain the temperature of the sea-bottom at great depths, with a view to determining the questions of hot and cold currents, are necessarily of great strength, some of them having to bear a pressure equal to four tons on every square inch.

HESTER MORLEY'S PROMISE.

BY HESBA STRETTON,

AUTHOR OF "THE DOCTOR'S DILEMMA," ETC. ETC.

CHAPTER THE FORTY-FIFTH.

GOOD NEWS FOR CARL.

JOHN MORLEY had desired to be alone, that he might confront a thought which had been haunting him ever since he had learned that Rose was not dead.

His mind was no longer warped and blinded. With the vigour which had returned to his frame, there had come a clearness of judgment to his reason. Yet the sudden news that Rose lived had probed the old wound to its depths. As long as he had believed her dead, his pardon of her transgression against him had been simple. Now a serious

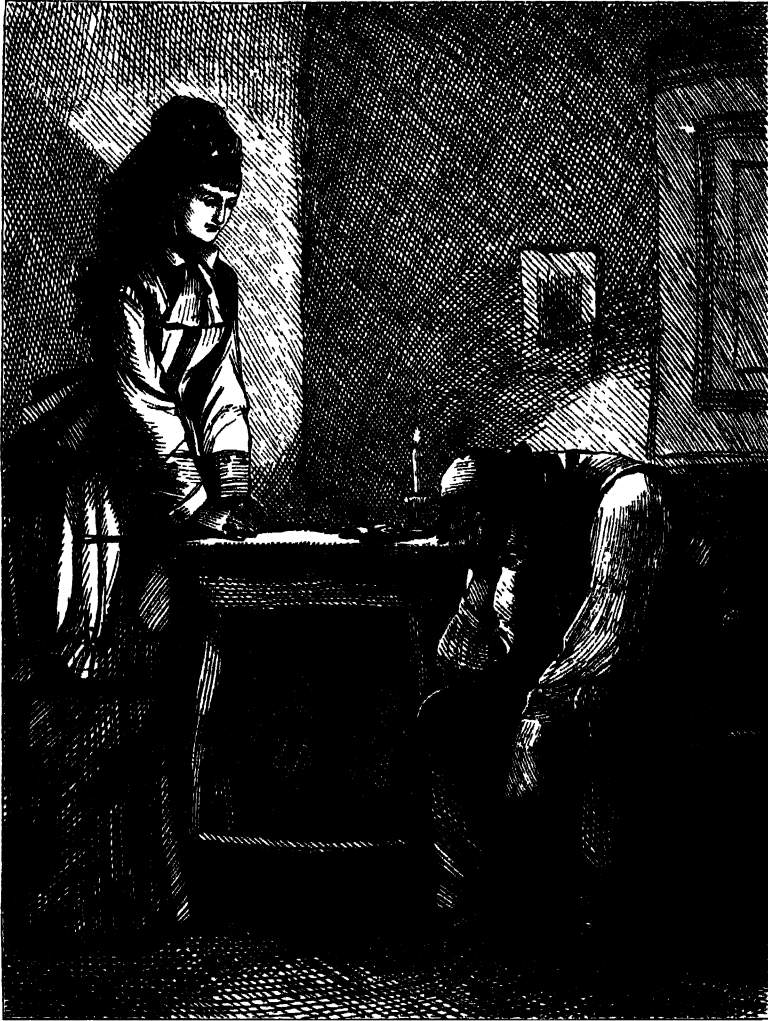
complication came into it. She was alive, and dwelling in the home she had forsaken—the home to which he must soon return. His duty to Hester required that he should not retain her in this exile, to which she resigned herself through devotion to him. That his daughter loved Carl was apparent to him, and he had but little doubt that Carl loved her. Even if Robert Waldron did not disclose the secret of their hiding-place, which need be kept as a secret no longer, it was his duty to return to his own town, and appear again amongst his townsmen.

But Rose was there! And there too was the

dreary life which had fallen from him suddenly as a burden loosened from his weary shoulders. Must he stoop to pick it up again? Must he keep Rose in his house, and upon his hearth? He could not do that.

He felt that, though he might forgive her, though he did forgive her with all his heart, though there

could not ask Hester what he must do. How could his daughter understand it? There was no alternative offered to him, except the selfish one of staying where he was in this pleasant retreat. But that would be unjust to Hester, whose home-sickness was known to him. A sharp conflict, quickly ended, was fought in his spirit. When he returned



'OH! HOW COULD YOU BE SO CRUEL!'

was still in the depths of his nature a profound passion for his young wife who had been unfaithful to him, he could never suffer her again to be to him what Hester's mother had been. There was an awful sadness in this. Rose dead had not been to him the terrible grief which Rose living would be. If he returned, he must look upon her fair face again, listen to her sweet voice, be shaken like a reed before her; yet put her away inexorably, against all tears, all pleadings, all contrition. He

to the house of the widow Leinet, he told Hester that they would start for England in a few days.

During the three past days, Hester and her father had had many confidential conversations. The mystery of the attack made upon Robert, and the similar one by which Rose had well-nigh perished, had been fully discussed between them. It had not been any mystery to Hester until now. She had been as fully convinced as Grant and Robert, that her father had been the stealthy as-

saillant in the first instance ; and there had been scarcely a doubt upon her mind that he had attacked Rose in a paroxysm of madness and despair which had made him unconscious of his own deed. But now that he emphatically maintained his innocence, and narrated circumstantially the details of his finding of Rose already dead, as he supposed, she could not withhold her credence. By repeated and strenuous efforts of his memory, the recollection came back to him of having heard Lawson closing the side-door which gave him access to his workrooms ; and this he told to Hester. He had not been alone in the house then. Lawson had been there ; and it must have been he who had been the secret and vindictive foe. No one knew as she did the profound hatred that Rose had provoked in him, even before her marriage with his master.

To no one else had he displayed it. Then came back to her mind his wild, half-crazy denunciations of her ; his superstitious visions of her own mother's presence, which had ceased when Rose usurped her place in the household. The criminal could be no other than Lawson.

But Robert on his part was speeding away for England, with his conviction in no way shaken that it was John Morley's hand which had been lifted up against himself and Rose. His denial of the crime seemed perfectly natural, and almost justifiable, to him ; it had been quiet and brief, a mere parenthesis in a conversation. Besides, he was convinced that he had no other enemy, not merely in Little Aston, but in all England itself. He still considered himself as having been placed more on a level with John Morley by this double attempt at revenge.

He did not see any reason why, where there was so much mutually to forgive, John Morley could not be fully reconciled to his penitent wife. They must leave Little Aston, of course ; but London would afford them a residence where their former life would be altogether unknown. It was in his father's power to procure a post as secretary or librarian for John Morley ; and they could live somewhere near Carl and Hester, and be very happy after all. It seemed as if he were doomed to pay the heaviest penalty himself.

He reached Little Aston towards the close of the second day, having stopped nowhere on his journey. Grant's house was on his way to Aston Court, and he turned in to see his little Hester for a minute.

It was a week since he had left her, and consumption takes rapid strides sometimes. He was afraid to inquire from the servant how the child was, but passed on quickly to the room where he had seen her last. It was empty. Even the cushions and pillows, which had been piled up on the sofa to make it softer for her weak little frame, had been

removed, as if she no longer occupied this place. His heart contracted with a terrible dread. The fatherly instinct, so strong in Mr. Waldron, had been quickly and strongly developed in himself. How dear the child had been to him, how firm and close a hold she had laid upon his affection, he had scarcely known till this moment. He turned sharply round, and demanded where Mrs. Grant was. She was up-stairs in the room which had formerly been Carl's study. Robert hastened there, and entered it abruptly.

Annie was not in the room, but Carl was, looking pale and suffering, his eyes wearing an expression of a continual anxiety. He was standing at the window, which faced westward, watching the sun set, but not really seeing it, for his troubled thoughts were far away from any object that his gaze rested upon.

He turned as Robert entered, and came forward to greet him.

"Where is Hester?" asked Robert in a broken voice.

"Hester!" cried Carl. "How can I tell? Would to God I knew!"

"But my little Hetty," said Robert ; "you know where she is, Carl. She is not dead?"

"No," answered Carl, with a look of profound sympathy ; "your little child is not dead. She is living still ; but we have taken her to her mother. She pined to go to her, as soon as she knew she was in this neighbourhood ; and Rose entreated to have her. She is gone to die in John Morley's house."

"Good heavens!" exclaimed Robert ; "then I cannot see her, I cannot nurse her again."

He felt that it would be utterly impossible for him to visit John Morley's house with Rose in it, to watch with her the child's coming death. How could he bear to face Rose in the presence of their dying child? No ; he had lost the little creature, so lately found, whose life had been cold and desolate through him. He felt a momentary anger that they should have stolen her away from him, during his absence, but it died away as Carl spoke again.

"I thought of that," he said ; "but what else could we do? The mother's claim is the strongest. She has been a living child for Rose these many years ; you have known her only a few months. Besides, Hetty pined and grieved about it. She would not have been living now if we had not yielded. You were gone, and we did not know when you might return."

It was done, and could not be undone, even if he had wished it. She was as surely separated from him, for the short period that still remained of her life, as if the grave had closed over her. Yet Carl had acted well, had done precisely what a true and tender nature dictated. He could not blame him.

No reproval could fall upon any one except himself.

"Carl," he said, after a long silence, "I have found Hester."

"Hester?" he cried again, starting violently, and grasping Robert's arm. "What did you say? You have found Hester?"

"Yes, Hester and John Morley," he answered almost reluctantly.

Carl could not articulate a syllable, but he trembled through all his limbs, and gazed with mingled incredulity and beseeching into Robert's face. He could not believe his own ears; yet there came a chilly recollection across him of Lawson's words, "I have a notion that Robert Waldron knows where she is." Now he said that he had found them! He had been absent a week, and had seen Hester! Carl scarcely knew whether to seize him by the throat or cast himself upon his knees before him, to extort this precious knowledge from him. He knew where Hester was, she who as truly belonged to him as if he had secured her troth. For did she not belong to him? What right had this rich, prosperous man, the favourite of the world and of fortune, to come between him and her? Was not every principle of justice and fitness opposed to the possibility of his possessing Hester? Hardly a moment had passed since Robert had uttered his reluctant tidings, and these thoughts had only flashed through Carl's brain, when he spoke again more freely and heartily.

"I discovered where they were from a hint dropped by Lawson's mother, who knew nothing herself of their place of concealment. They fled to her native place, a little town in Burgundy. I went there to make sure that my guess was correct, and found myself right. Of course they had never heard any news from England, and Heaven knows how long they might have hidden there, for John Morley had no idea but that Rose was dead. He denies the crime, and he denies ever striking me; but then why did he escape? He is not quite sane yet. He is unwilling to return to England, though Hester suffers from her long trouble. She is homesick, you can see it plainly, and she is longing to come back."

"I must go to them," interrupted Carl, taking a stride towards the door, as if he would set off the same instant.

"I knew you would," said Robert, in an accent of relief and regret. "Yes, go. You will prevail with him, and take care of her. But stay; I must give you better directions as to how you are to find them; and you cannot leave here before the first train in the morning. What a happy fellow you are!"

He uttered the last words with a smile sadder than many tears are. Carl was arrested and quieted by it.

He descended from the height of his own unexpected joy, to enter into the desolation and loneliness of Robert Waldron. They talked together until long after the sun had gone down, and then parted with a friendship begun between them which would last their life-time.

CHAPTER THE FORTY-SIXTH
TO BURGUNDY.

WITH Robert's very minute directions, and with the certainty of finding Hester at the end of his journey, Carl felt no sort of hesitation or embarrassment at the idea of passing through a country, the language of which was altogether unfamiliar to him.

He knew three or four dead languages, but he had no practical knowledge of French, and could not comprehend a word addressed to him by any of his fellow passengers, or the railway officials; but as far as Paris his ignorance did not prove inconvenient.

He crossed the Channel and sped up to Paris, as swiftly as steamers and railways could take him; but it appeared the slowest mode of transit it had ever been his lot to experience. An interpreter accompanied the train, and expedited his passage through Paris to the Lyons railway station, from which was the line running through Burgundy. He knew how long it would be before he could reach the small station, which Robert had described to him, and where he would find a diligence plainly inscribed with the word "Ecquemenville." He would have nothing to do but seat himself in it, put six francs into the hand of the driver, and there would be no longer any difficulty to surmount in fulfilling his mission. After that, Hester would be his interpreter. But if there had been a thousand difficulties, multiplied by a thousand dangers, he would have met them all to find her at the end of them.

The country through which he was passing received but small attention from him, though now and then he started, as if roused from a slight slumber, to give a brief glance at the long valleys and broad table-lands he was traversing. He promised himself to survey them more carefully on his return, when Hester and her father were with him.

One question agitated him very greatly. Was it true that John Morley was innocent of any attempt to avenge himself either upon Rose or Robert Waldron? So far as his liability to earthly judgment and punishment was concerned, he ran no risk of being called upon to expiate his crime. Circumstances had singularly favoured the criminal. But Carl longed to believe that the hand of Hester's father was free from every stain. His mind was tossed from one thought to another in a tumult of hope and apprehension, until he found that the train began to slacken speed, at the time

when they should be approaching the station where he was to alight.

The train had been shunted into a siding, to wait until another, bound for Paris, had started from the little station. It was passing them slowly, and his glance, now on the alert, fell upon the last compartment of a second-class carriage as it glided by. There sat—he could not by any chance be mistaken—John Morley, but erect, vigorous, and sun-burnt, with an unwonted energy in his face, and beside him was Hester, whose full face he could not see as it was turned towards her father, but whose delicate profile was too familiar to him ever to be forgotten. An instant only did this vision of her last, for the train was getting up its speed, and almost as he saw her, she was lost to his sight again.

Carl's first impulse was to thrust himself half out of the window, and to shout after the receding train; but he restrained himself, and waited until his carriage-door was unlocked. Without doubt this was the station which he had looked for; the ticket was taken from him, and he alighted mechanically.

He stood motionless, gazing down the long straight line of railway, narrowing to a vanishing point at a great distance off, along which he could yet see the film of smoke fading away into the blue air. A few other travellers had descended from the train, but they did not disperse hastily as in England. They lingered instead, staring hard at this handsome young foreigner, who stood immovable in an attitude of dismay.

When Carl awoke to his ludicrous position, he found himself surrounded by a group of country-people, whose eyes and mouths were wide open, and seemed little likely to close again. He lifted his hat from his beating temples, to let the cool air play about them; and the Frenchmen, not to be outdone in politeness, removed theirs, standing round him bare-headed in the glowing sunshine. Carl was half beside himself with disappointment and embarrassment.

"Is there nobody here that can speak English?" he exclaimed pathetically. This was an utterly unforeseen crisis, full of difficulty and anxiety; at the moment he would have exchanged all his scholarly knowledge of dead languages for as good an acquaintance with colloquial French. Where was the train that had just disappeared bound for? Was it going to Paris, or was John Morley carrying away Hester to some still more obscure hiding-place than Ecquemonville? This last was possible, if he was not quite sane, and was unwilling to return to Little Aston. Or perhaps they intended to go back to Ecquemonville. The driver of the diligence very probably knew that, and where they had taken tickets for; but how could he communicate with him? He was too deeply absorbed in

these reflections to care very greatly for the unblinking eyelids and unabashed stare of the breathless spectators about him, each one of whom seemed afraid he should miss some eccentricity of the Englishman's behaviour.

"*How doyedo?*" said a voice at Carl's side, dwelling long upon the first word, and running the other three into one. He turned quickly round, and saw a bright but sallow face, with black hair drawn tight from it, and confined by a pretty little white cap. The eyes meeting his were dark, and smiled with a somewhat anxious expression, as the speaker awaited the effect of her salutation.

"Thank Heaven, you can speak English!" exclaimed Carl fervently, taking the little woman's hand eagerly into his, and looking down upon her with a flush of gladness on his embarrassed face.

"*How doyedo?*" she inquired again with greater confidence.

"Oh, quite well, thank you!" said Carl rapidly. "I want to know where yonder train is going to?"

He pointed down the line, where the last streak of smoke was quickly vanishing, and she followed the direction of his finger with her bright eyes, but there was an expression of uneasiness in them.

"I no you comprehends no," she said, shaking her head anxiously; "*how doyedo?*"

"I want to know," persisted Carl, "if that train is going to Paris?"

He pronounced the word Paris well enough for her to understand it, and she caught at it quickly. But he had come direct from there, and could not wish to return, she thought.

He continued pointing down the line, and repeating his question, "Is it going to Paris?"

"No, no," she answered, shaking her head emphatically, and afterwards waving her hand comprehensively about the surrounding country, "noh, noh; pas à Paris."

The audience were enjoying this unintelligible interview with great pleasure; but Carl's hope had perished altogether. Hester was lost to him at the very time he had expected to find her. He sighed a heavy sigh of vexation and perplexity; but he could not help smiling at the solicitude of the little Frenchwoman, who looked into his face with an air of disappointment.

"*How doyedo?*" she repeated, with a desire to afford him a forlorn comfort by her knowledge of his language.

He answered only by another troubled smile, and broke through the circle surrounding him. There was a time-table near the window of the ticket office, and by dint of profound and repeated study Carl made sure that there was no train to Paris stopping at the little station until the same hour the next day. He pointed it out to his new friend, and made her understand that he must return to

Paris by that train. In the meantime she took him into her charge, and conducted him to an hotel, where he was entertained with the utmost hospitality and curiosity. But he was too fully occupied with anxious thoughts concerning John Morley and Hester, to be conscious either of kindness or inquisitiveness. His anxiety grew almost intolerable before the moment came when he seated himself in the train which was to convey him back to Paris.

CHAPTER THE FORTY-SEVENTH.
AT HOME AGAIN.

FOUR days after Robert Waldron returned to Little Aston, John Morley and Hester were on their way thither. They were going home gladly, yet with a solemn gladness, for a dark shadow fell across the future. The thought of Rose was upon both their hearts. How would they meet her? In what relationship could she stand to them in the future?

Even Hester felt the terrible weight and difficulty of this question. She clung more closely to her father in this time of conflict, and scarcely gave Carl a thought as they were passing through London. He left all the arrangements of their journey to her, and she, with the intolerance of suspense natural to her years, would not stop for rest on the way.

Both of them shrank from the idea of being recognised at Little Aston station, so they left the train about two miles from it, at a village where neither of them was known.

It was a soft, dark, soundless night of autumn, with no breeze abroad to rustle the dying leaves. The air was heavy and scented, with a languor in it which oppressed the spirits, and caused Hester to sigh often with a painful and unconquerable depression. All the silence and utter stillness, the muteness of the quiet hedgerows, where the birds uttered no sleepy chirp as they do in spring and summer when a footfall disturbs them in their nests, the hush of the dark funereal trees which made no stir or murmur overhead—all this silence seemed ominous. She wanted a little whisper of welcome and encouragement. If her father had been indeed a murderer, skulking under the black shadows of the trees for concealment, there could not have been a more condemning hush and dumbness of all nature as he passed by. The sky above them was shrouded by one unbroken cloud, through which neither moon nor star looked down upon them.

For a hundred yards or so a little wayside brook gurgled along their path with a pleasant and soothing babble, but it also soon forsook them, and turned aside into the meadows, leaving the road more cheerless by its desertion.

John Morley was silent, too; but if she could

have seen his face she would have been alarmed at the strong passions which furrowed it. This was the walk he had most often taken with Rose, in those early days when he was lavishing a wealth of love upon her, and when he believed himself beloved again, because her treacherous blue eyes had been bent upon him, dewy with a feigned and false tenderness. Every step was bringing him nearer his home, and nearer her presence in his house.

Even now he could have turned and fled again, fled back to that pleasant and sunny valley in Burgundy, where no man knew his dishonour. But Hester was by his side, though he was but half conscious of her nearness, and had but a vague sense of his complete wretchedness without her. It was when they came in sight of the town lamps, and their own street lay before them, that he arrested his steady step for an instant, and lifting her hand reverently to his lips, murmured—

“God bless you, my daughter!”

The chapel stood at their left hand, and Hester drew her father into the shadow of its great portico, where she had found Rose homeless and friendless. They stood behind the pillars, hand pressed in hand, pausing for a little while before making the last stage of their journey. Opposite to them, in the garret where Lawson and his mother lived, there twinkled the faint glimmer of a candle in the uncurtained window, which was too high to be overlooked.

“Father,” whispered Hester, pressing his hand more warmly, “let me go and get Lawson’s key, and then we can enter our home without going in at the house door. You can turn into your own room, while I see where she is. It is late, and she may be already asleep; or she may be gone back to the old nursery. You need not see her to-night. Take some rest first, and you will feel better.”

John Morley answered only by releasing her hand, and she left him in the chapel portico. Very quickly but softly she mounted the familiar staircase, and pushed open the door of the garret. Lawson was alone, leaning back in a large old chair, and looking very ill and worn. His dark eyes burned under his grey eyebrows, and his hollow cheeks were of an ashy paleness; his hair was greyer and his eyes redder and more sunken than when she had seen him last. She had advanced half-way across the room before he perceived her entrance.

“Miss Hester!” he cried in a tone of terror.

“Yes, it is Hester, dear old Lawson,” she said; “Hester come back, and her father. He is waiting outside for me. I am come here for your key, so that we may get in home without letting anybody know.”

“She is there,” he answered in a hoarse and hollow voice.

"We know it," said Hester; "I think I know all about it, Lawson. There is nobody in the world who knows it all as I do. You used to love me very dearly, and my mother too. But, oh! how could you be so cruel, so wicked? See what sorrow it brought upon me! I think I should almost have died of home-sickness, if we had not known soon that we could come home safely."

She uttered her reproaches in a tender yet penetrating tone; and Lawson laid his palsied head upon the table before him, groaning bitterly. He made no attempt to answer her; but when he lifted his face for an instant to look at her, she was shocked at its expression of suffering and despair.

"Are you ill, dear old Lawson?" she asked.

"I have my medicine here," he answered, tapping a small box which lay close to his hand.

"I cannot stay now," she said, "my father is waiting for me. I see the key is hanging up in its old place. Good-bye, Lawson. Come down and see me alone in the morning—alone, you know."

She lingered for a minute to see if he would look up, or speak to her once more, but he did not; and she hurried away and out in the street again to her father.

They walked down the quiet street side by side, and in silence, for their hearts were too full for speech now. Their tread was hushed and measured, as though they formed part of a funeral procession. On either hand the tall houses were dark and full of gloomy shadows, which moved fitfully as they moved in the flickering light of the few and feeble lamps. The strip of sky overhead was breaking into a multitude of small clouds, and the moon, which was on the wane, looked down with a pale and hurried gleam through the rifts, before the clouds closed speedily again over its mournful face. Their steps, slow before, slackened as they drew nearer to their old home, and ceased altogether as they stood opposite to it, looking up at its dark gables traced against the obscure sky. Of all who had ever gazed at the decayed and dingy dwelling, none had ever looked with such eyes as theirs.

A shiver passed through them both, as if some deadly miasma had breathed upon them from the deserted and dishonoured house. Yet it was their home, the only home that Hester had ever known; the home to which John Morley had brought her mother, and that second wife of his who had disgraced it by her sin. They stood opposite to it, two dark shadows in the gloom, scarcely daring to venture across the narrow street and invade the solemn solitude, if solitude indeed were there, of the empty house.

"Come," said Hester at last, grasping her father's hand again, and leading him like a child across the street.

The door by which Lawson entered his work-room was soon gained by an outer staircase, like that leading to the nursery, and it brought them on to the second floor of the building. Hester unlocked it and threw it open, a damp, cold, earthy air greeting them. The darkness was unbroken blackness within; but there was no danger that they should stumble upon the floor their feet had trodden so often. Yet John Morley stood within the closed door, rooted and immovable, while Hester found Lawson's match-box and kindled a light. She came back to him, and looked into his face. It had quite lost its new-born air of resolve and strength; and he stood with his head drooping once more, and his shoulders bowed, an old and decrepit man. She put both her arms fondly about his neck, and forced him to look at her.

"Have we done wrong in returning here?" she asked; "do you feel sorry we came back?"

"No, no," he answered; "we have done well. It is but a passing paroxysm, a dread which is almost over. In a minute or two I shall be myself again. I will go to my own room, Hester."

He put his arm through hers and leaned heavily upon it as she led him across the empty work-rooms. They found the door into the house unfastened, though a bolt was upon it which had never been there in their time. It opened at one end of the long dark passage which ran in a straight line through the middle of the house. At the other end was the door of Rose's drawing-room, standing wide open, and sending a broad, bright stream of light into the darkness. Almost involuntarily Hester extinguished her candle, and drew her father's arm more closely through her own, thinking to gain his room unseen. But John Morley did not stir, and she could catch, in the glimmer which reached them, the glare of his eyes staring steadily into the lighted room. There was the sound of a footfall passing to and fro on the carpeted floor, but no one came into sight; and after a minute or two John Morley whispered into his daughter's ear.

"I must see her," he said; "let us go forward softly. Even if she discovers me here, I must see her this night."

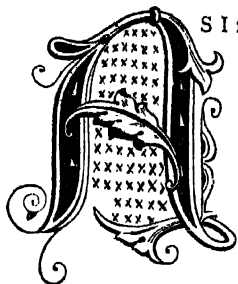
With stealthy footsteps, as if they had no right to be in their own home, they crept along the passage until they could command the view of half the room within. It was many years since Hester had looked into it, and she had grown from childhood to womanhood since; but to her eye there was little changed. Yet at one corner stood a small bed—she recollected it as her own—but it was not occupied.

The child who had been sleeping in it was now being carried to and fro about the room, in the arms of her father, Robert Waldron.

MEN WHO FACE DEATH.

THE WAR CORRESPONDENT.—II.

IN TWO PARTS.—PART THE SECOND.



AS I felt that I was being watched, I gave no signs of objecting to the wine, but filled the tumbler with water, and from time to time took the smallest possible sips at it. As I finished my supper and rose from the table, the landlord, who had remained in the room, said in a tone which was meant to

be pleasant, but in which I detected anger and disappointment, "The signor does not like the wine?" "Upon the contrary," I said, "the wine is excellent. Wine however does not agree with me; it turns acid, and the doctor forbids it. Oh dear," I yawned, as I lit my candle, "how tired I am, to be sure! Good night." A surly good night was the reply. I went up-stairs, unlocked the door, and found that it would not lock on the inside. With a great exertion of my strength I lifted a heavy chest, carried it quietly across the room, and set it down noiselessly against the door. Then I sat down to think. It was evident to me that these scoundrels of mulc-drivers were some of the scum of one of the large towns, and that now, as they were deserting with the animals and goods under their charge, they would not hesitate to add to their offences by the trifling crime of murdering an Englishman, about whom no inquiries were likely to be made; and it was also evident that in the landlord of this lively little inn they had a kindred spirit. Confident in my revolvers, and having good reason to believe that there were only six of them, I felt excited rather than alarmed; however I determined at once to escape from the window if possible. I thought it probable that I was watched, and therefore opened the window carelessly and put out my arm, as though to feel if the light mist which had begun to fall as I returned from stabling my horse was still coming down.

My attitude was careless, but as my face was in shadow I was able to use my eyes, and saw two figures standing on the opposite side of the road. With an exclamation of disgust at the rain, I closed the window again. I had little doubt before; I had none now. I went to my holsters, took out my pistols, and uttered a mental thanksgiving that I had them with me. My plan was simple: I had nothing to do but to sit down, keep awake, and wait to be attacked. I had little fear of going to sleep, therefore I drew a chair against the bed so that I could sit up and at the same time rest, put the candle and my pistols on a table beside me, put another chair for my feet, and sat down. I did not

mean to blow the candle out for a few minutes, so as to allow the men outside to believe that I was quietly getting into bed. I took up one of my pistols, looked at it, took aim at the door, and pressed the trigger to raise the hammer a little, for it was a double-action weapon. To my surprise the trigger, instead of yielding to my finger, remained stiff and immovable. I pressed a little stronger, to make sure that it was not fancy, but it was fixed. "To think of its getting out of order at this moment of all others!" I said to myself, a shiver of alarm running through me as I examined it. Something was evidently the matter.

At last, scrutinising it very closely by the candle, almost a cry broke from me as I saw that a piece of iron of some sort had been jammed in behind the trigger. I caught up the other pistol—my worst fears were realised. It also had been disabled. I sat half stunned by the shock. I was looking Death very nearly in the face now, and the prospect did what it never had done before, or since—brought out a cold perspiration.

It was a minute or two before I could realise the position. I understood it at last. The landlord had another key to my room, and while I was waiting for supper he had entered the room and disabled my pistols. I was indeed a rat caught in a trap, and a rat almost without teeth. I was myself again now, and could think calmly on my chances. They were very small. I had a capital knife with a good-sized spring blade, which I used to cut my bread with. That was something anyhow. But more than this I relied on the butt-end of one of my heavy pistols. I am a powerful man, and relied much on a good swinging blow, whereas with knives they would be my-equals. However I resolved to keep the open knife in my left hand, to use when they closed. My plan of campaign was now determined upon. I would wait quietly until I heard them at my door. No doubt four of them would be there. Directly I heard them I would jump from the window, which was about ten feet from the ground. "I ought," I argued with myself, "to be able to knock those two fellows down there and be off into the fields, before the men at my door can understand what is up and be down to the assistance of those outside." The prospects were not so bad after all. My spirits rose, and I looked round the room to see if there were anything about that might make a better weapon than my revolver, which, although a formidable striking weapon, was yet very short, a serious disadvantage in a fight with men armed with knives. I could see nothing, but my eyes fell on a door which I had tried and found locked when I first entered the

room. It was apparently only a closet, but it was just possible that it might lead into some other room, from which I could make my escape by the window. So I at once set to work with my knife, and soon had the satisfaction of feeling the lock shoot back with a click. I clubbed my pistol before I opened the door, as for anything I could tell some of my foes might be upon the other side; and with a sudden spring backwards, so as to place myself in a position of defence, I threw back the door.

For the second time that night a cry rose to my lips. Before me was a closet, and in it, standing stiff and upright, was the dead body of a young Garibaldian officer. The shock tried my nerves more than the rush of the assassins would have done, and for a minute or two I stood horror-struck. Then I shook off the feeling of awe, and examined my predecessor in this murder-room. He had been stabbed in the back, and the placidity of his face told of an instantaneous death. In the corner of the closet behind him was something that made my heart give a throb of delight. It was his sword, which had, as useless to the murderers, been thrown in there to be buried with the body. The murder could only have taken place the night before, for it was only then that the Garibaldians had marched out to Bagadino. It was probable that he had gone on from his regiment either to try and forage up some provision, or to make inquiries whether the Austrians had been heard of in that direction, and had allowed himself to be seduced by the temptation of the unwonted luxury of a bed.

As I looked at him a fresh idea occurred to me, one by which it was quite possible I might avoid fighting altogether. I did not hesitate a moment as to carrying it into action. I unbuttoned his tunic and pulled it off; took off my own coat and put it on him; lifted the body and laid it on the bed, partly turned over on to the face, and with the coverlid thrown carelessly over the legs. The deception would not have stood an instant's examination by daylight, but I trusted to a dim light and the haste of the murderers. I put on his tunic and cap, and took out my watch and laid it with all my loose silver, and a few gold coins, on the table, and put my pocket-book beside them, having first taken out all the notes and valuable papers. Then I took away the chest from the door and put it back into its place as quietly as before, and with a final look round to see that all was natural, I blew out the candle and stepped into the cupboard.

It seemed an age before I heard a creaking on the stairs—I believe that it was about an hour and a half. I was more fidgety and nervous for the crisis than actually afraid of it; for even if the worst came to the worst, and the trick was discovered, I felt that the chances were now all in my favour. I was certain that if I were to sally suddenly out when an exclamation told that they perceived

something unusual in their victim, or when they attempted to move the body, their surprise and horror at the appearance of what they would take for the spectre of their victim of the previous night would so paralyse them, that I should be able to dispose of a couple of them at least before they could recover from their first fright, and that the others would probably make a headlong bolt down the stairs. Indeed, I almost questioned whether in any case this would not be the best course to adopt, and was only deterred from it by the idea that there might be more of the ruffians down-stairs.

Presently I heard a slight noise without, and then a little creak of the door; and from a crack in the woodwork of the door of the closet I could see a faint light. There was a pause, then a hurried rush, and the sound of two heavy blows as the ruffians struck their knives into the figure on the bed. I held my breath and grasped my sword firmly. "Cospetta," one of them said, "he slept soundly. I half thought he suspected us, and he was big enough to have given us trouble." "Here is his watch, and money, and purse," another voice said, "and here are his pistols by his bedside; the fool never thought of seeing if they were all right. Come along, let's see what is in his purse; we can stow that lumber away presently with the other one. Bring that bag down, there may be something in it." There was a trampling of feet, and then the door closed, and the room was in darkness again.

I waited a moment till I heard a low call outside, and a moment afterwards the closing of the street-door. There was no occasion for further delay. I hurried out of my closet, opened the window nimbly, and leapt out as quickly as I could. In two minutes I was at the stable, and in as much more was galloping at full speed towards Bagadino. I had some little trouble with the sentries, but soon was passed on to an officer. Then my story was briefly told, and the uniform coat with the deep patch of blood in the back vouched for its truthfulness. I was taken at once to the colonel in command, and in ten minutes was riding back again with two mounted officers, by the side of a party of twenty of the Garibaldian Bersaglieri.

We had not gone more than a mile along the road, when a glare suddenly illuminated the darkness in front of us. "I fear we are too late," I said; "that light is just in the direction of the house." "Let us ride on," one of the officers said, "we may catch some of the villains." Ten minutes' gallop brought us up to the inn. It was already a sheet of flame. A few peasants from the village beyond stood gazing stupidly at the sight; but of the original inmates of the house, and mules with them, there was no sign. They must have gone up again to search the body for more money very soon after I had made my escape, and knowing what would happen, lost no time in decamping.

TWO PICTURES. 2



"HOT TEARS DOWN HER THIN CHEEKS FOUR"

In ID halls where mirrored splendours glance
 She moves with queenly grace :
 Well doth the silken robe enhance
 The beauty of her face.

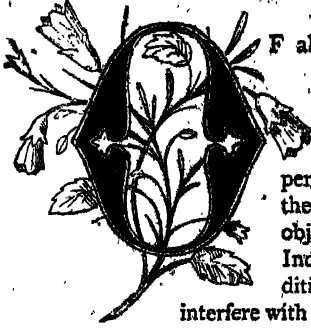
And underneath the bodice, bright
 With many a jewel rare,
 Her heart throbs with a full delight,
 As a lark in summer air.

In a close gas-lighted room
A black-stoled woman sits,
Sewing rich silks on foreign loom,
And musing oft by fits.

And hot tears down her thin cheeks pour,
Sweat of the heart's keen pain—
Pardon, my lady—see, 'tis o'er—
She plies her work again. J. W. T.

THE INCOME-TAX AND SMALL INCOMES.

BY HENRY FAWCETT, M.P.



ALL the varied systems of taxation which have been advocated by politicians and economists, there is not perhaps one to which theoretical and practical objections cannot be made. Indirect taxes on commodities, for instance, often interfere with the natural development of trade; they also fall with much greater severity on the poor than on the rich. Take for example the duty of sixpence a pound on tea. The agricultural labourer with twelve shillings a week to spend for the entire support of a family of eight persons, who is compelled to make tea a principal article of diet, has to pay sixpence to the State for every pound he consumes, while no more than sixpence per pound is paid by the squire with an income of £10,000 a year.

In tea duty alone, the agricultural labourer will have to spend a sum that amounts to an income-tax of fivepence in the pound, reckoning that he gets twelve shillings a week, and that he uses a pound of tea in a fortnight. If the squire's family with £10,000 a year uses four pounds of tea in a week, a consumption eight times greater than the labourer's, the sum paid as tea duty only amounts to an income-tax of just one-eighth of a penny in the pound.

In the article of tea, therefore, the labourer, consuming only one-eighth of the quantity, is taxed in proportion to his income forty times more than the squire. There is another kind of inequality between rich and poor in such taxes as the tea duty. The higher qualities of tea pay no more than the lower; so while tea at two shillings a pound is increased in price in consequence of the duty 33½ per cent., tea at four shillings and sixpence a pound is increased in price only 12½ per cent.

These inequalities in the incidence of such a tax as the tea duty are essential; they cannot be removed as long as the tax is maintained. When duty is paid, it is impossible to say whether the tea will be used by the rich or the poor. It would be impossible to charge one duty to one man, and another to another, for the same article.

It has sometimes been attempted to remedy the inequality just referred to, by charging a higher duty on articles of a superior quality—making the tax, for instance, imposed on wine and tobacco vary in proportion to the value of the various qualities of these commodities. But these *ad valorem* duties are attended with insuperable commercial objections; they are very vexatious to merchants; they lead to a great deal of fraud, and impede the circulation and exchange of commodities.

Perhaps it will be said, if such great inequality attends the collection of the tea duty, the sooner it is got rid of the better. And in truth there is a great deal to be said for getting rid of it, although the inequality between the labourer and the squire is not so great as it seems when considering the tea duty alone. For instance, the squire pays an income-tax of perhaps fourpence in the pound, from which the labourer is exempt; a large sum on account of local taxation, either directly or indirectly, comes out of his pocket; he also contributes to the State in proportion to the luxuries he consumes; wine, spirits, tobacco, horses, carriages, men-servants—all indicate items of his expenditure in proportion to which he is charged with a contribution to the national purse. It is not therefore sufficient to condemn a tax, to show that it falls with peculiar severity on a particular class. The inequalities in the incidence of any one item of taxation may be, and often are, compensated for by inequalities in an opposite direction in other items of taxation. Thus, if it can be shown that the working classes contribute to indirect taxation far more in proportion to their income than the middle and upper classes, it should at the same time be remembered that the whole weight of direct taxation falls upon the two latter.

It ought, however, to be considered whether there is any section of the community not exempted from direct taxation, on which the burden of indirect taxation falls with peculiar severity. If there be such a class, they can with justice urge that they ought to be relieved from some of the taxation at present imposed upon them. If there are any payers of income-tax with incomes little exceeding the earnings of a skilled mechanic, they are the people who have most cause to complain of the burden of taxation. Living on the border-land, in

point of means, between the working class and the merchant class, they incur, so far as taxation is concerned, the penalties belonging to both. They are almost as poor as the working class; therefore a large proportion of their means is taken in the shape of taxes on the necessities of life, and they are also compelled to contribute to the income-tax.

It is hardly necessary to say that there is a class of persons who occupy this undesirable position—viz., the possessors of small incomes of from £150 to £300 a year. At the present time there seems to be a conjunction of circumstances to render the lot of these persons one of special hardship. The general rise in prices which has lately taken place is so marked as to attract universal notice. The rise has been general, but it has been most excessive in those articles which constitute the necessities of life. Coal, butchers' meat, bacon, all dairy produce, and vegetables have increased in price within the last ten years from 20 to 100 per cent. The working class compensate themselves for the increased cost of living by obtaining higher wages; but this resort is not accessible to the struggling widows, the half-pay officers, and the City clerks, whose incomes are either absolutely fixed, or so much regulated by custom that it takes many years of high prices to produce any increase in them. That these persons, having incomes from £150 to £300 a year, should be compelled to contribute to the income-tax, is undeniably a hardship.

The question now arises, ought they to be relieved from this taxation? I have no sympathy with the outcry, now so popular, against the income-tax in itself. On the contrary, I think that in many important particulars it fulfils the qualities essential in a good tax. No one can say that in this country it unduly reduces the national capital, or retards the production of wealth. It interferes with the production and distribution of commodities far less than the excise and import duties, or than any tax yielding a similar amount; its cost of collection is small compared with the sum it brings in to the Exchequer, and it, generally speaking, varies with the ability to pay of those who are subject to it; when they have more income they have to pay a larger sum as income-tax.

The common objection that the tax is "un-English" and "unconstitutional" only shows how difficult it is for the opponents of the tax to find any substantial argument against it. The taxpayer is called upon to make a return of his income for the purpose of taxation; the return is regarded by the Income-tax Commissioners as strictly confidential. The process is rather like sending an archer out into a garden to gather the stick with which he is to be flogged; but so far from the tax being un-English, England is one of the

few countries in the world in which it has been found possible to maintain an income-tax.

The agitation against the income-tax proceeds, it appears, not from the class which really have a claim to be exempted from it, but from wealthy merchants and shopkeepers, who certainly cannot be regarded as deserving objects of national charity. If the income-tax were remitted other taxation would have to be imposed, and the commercial class, which is now protesting against the tax, would simply be obliged to pay away with one hand what it received with the other.

As a banker's clerk asks the drawer of a cheque, "How will you take it?" the State says to the wealthy taxpayers, "How shall we take it?" Hard cash must be taken in one way or another; and it is desirable, from a national point of view, to take it in such a manner that the burden of paying it cannot be shifted off the shoulders of the rich to those of the poor.

Having now endeavoured to make it quite clear that I have no predilection against the income-tax as such, I will proceed to consider the desirability of remitting or reducing it in the case of persons possessing small incomes.

In the first place, attention should be drawn to the exemptions already existing, and the grounds on which these exemptions are made; and it should then be considered how far the grounds on which the exemptions were originally based have been modified by the changed circumstances of the present day.

When the income-tax was imposed, in 1842, by Sir Robert Peel's Government, incomes under £100 a year were altogether exempted from the operation of the tax, and a lower percentage was levied on incomes between £100 and £150. Since that time the exemptions have been slightly extended, until the present rule is that incomes not reaching £100 are not taxed at all, and that a reduction of £80 is made in assessing income-tax on all incomes between £100 and £300.

Now the principle on which these exemptions were based seems to be, first, that it is undesirable to tax incomes of so small an amount that they are no more than sufficient to provide necessities for the families dependent on them; and, secondly, that incomes only slightly above this amount should be taxed at a lower rate, because their possessors are compelled to contribute so large a proportion of their means to indirect taxation. If these considerations still hold good, the case for a further exemption is fully made out. For if in 1842 an income of £100 was regarded as only sufficient to obtain necessities for the average number of persons depending on a single income, it cannot be doubted, taking into consideration the large rise in house-rent and the increased price of meat, dairy produce, vegetables, coals, and many articles

of clothing, that an income of £150 is now no more than sufficient for the maintenance of a family of an average number.

It is no doubt true that indirect taxation has been greatly reduced during the last thirty years. The increased prosperity of the country has made all taxes more productive, and under the wise financial legislation inaugurated by the late Sir Robert Peel, and further developed by Mr. Gladstone, large reductions have been made, principally in the direction of a repeal of indirect taxes on necessities.

In 1842 the aggregate sum raised by taxes on necessities was £19,200,000; in 1872 this amount was reduced to £7,900,000. Still the amount contributed by persons with incomes of, for instance, £200 to indirect taxation is very large in proportion to their means. That this is the case is self-evident to any one who will consider what the expenditure of these persons must be in taxed necessities, such as tea, sugar, and coffee. I am therefore of opinion that the same considerations which, in 1842, led to the exemption from the income-tax of all incomes of less than £100 a year, would now justify the exemption of incomes of less than £150, and I shall presently endeavour to show that there are other considerations which lead to the conclusion that the limit of the exemptions should be still further raised.

There is a good deal of misconception prevalent on the subject of the partial exemption from income-tax of incomes exceeding the limit at which the income-tax ceases to be levied. If this limit were fixed by law at £200, it would be manifestly ridiculous to tax on its whole amount an income of £205. This incongruity has been recognised by the law, and, as I have already stated, a reduction of £80 is made in reckoning the income-tax on all incomes between £100 and £300. But this plan leaves much to be desired. If an income of £100 is altogether exempt because it is no more than enough to provide for a family the necessities of life, why is £25 out of an income of £105 liable to income-tax? and, on the other hand, if an income of £300 is to be taxed only on £220, why should an income of £305 be taxed on the whole of its amount?

Obviously the only scheme of exemptions not incurring these objections is that put forward by Mr. Bentham, and afterwards by Mr. J. S. Mill. This plan is to define the amount up to which the income-tax should be remitted altogether. An income not exceeding this sum ought to be entirely exempt from the income-tax, and all other incomes ought to be taxed only on the amount by which they exceed that sum. Thus, for instance, it may be reckoned that £300 a year is not more than sufficient to provide a middle-class family of average size with the necessities of life. If this

sum were recognised as the limit of exemption, an income of £300 would not be taxed at all, an income of £320 would be taxed only on £20, and one of £1,000 would only be taxed on £700. That is to say, the taxable amount of every income would be £300 less than its actual amount.

It is difficult to discover any theoretical or practical objection to the adoption of this method of levying the income-tax; it is free from all the anomalies and inequalities of the present exemptions; it is extremely simple, and would be capable of universal application. It is remarkable that statesmen have not long since adopted it, instead of preferring the much more complicated and imperfect system now in vogue.

In the foregoing remarks I have made use of the expression "the sum necessary to provide a middle-class family of average size with the necessities of life." Why, it may be asked, is the word "middle-class" employed? Are not the necessities of life the same in every class? If a labourer's family can exist on two shillings a week per head, why cannot any other family do the same? It is no doubt true that what will keep one man from starvation, will probably do the same for another man. But in speaking of the necessities of life, no one means simply the minimum of oatcake and potatoes that would serve to keep body and soul together, but the minimum of food and other comforts and conveniences rendered essential to a family from habit, and to forego which would cause a loss of self-respect. In a labourer's family the standard of comfort is not so high as in the middle classes; but even in a labourer's family the things we are accustomed to call necessities would, at an earlier period of our history, have been looked upon as luxurious superfluities. The conversion of luxuries into necessities is constantly taking place in every class; it is one of the marks of the progress of society. In the middle class it is of course more frequent than in the working class. To a shopkeeper, for instance, it is a necessary of life to have boots and shoes and substantial clothing, provided at his own expense for himself and his family; he has also long recognised education as a necessity. If he could not pay for good food, clothing, and education for his family, he would regard himself as disgraced, and as little better than a pauper.

In estimating, therefore, the cost of living, for the purpose of deducting an equivalent sum from all incomes before subjecting them to an income-tax, we ought to consider, not what is the lowest cost at which a family could be kept from starvation, but the cost of maintaining the average standard of comfort already reached by the lower middle class. I believe the exemption would not be too high if this sum were estimated at £300 per annum, and if accordingly no income of less than £300 were

subject to the income-tax at all, and £300 were deducted from all other incomes before levying income-tax upon them. It may appear that these exemptions are very high. I urge their desirability, however, on account of the importance from a national point of view of the maintenance of a somewhat high standard of comfort in the lower middle class. The line of separation between this class and the wage-receiving class is not very strongly marked, and the former will influence the latter by precept and example. If the men of the lower middle class defer marriage until they are able to provide good food, clothing, and education for a family, a similar spirit will spread among the upper part of the working class. The best security against a superabundant population is the prevalence of a high standard of comfort among all classes of the community.

If £300 were deducted from the taxable amount of all incomes, the possessors of incomes of less than £300 would still have to part with a considerable portion of their means through indirect taxes on commodities, and they would also have to contribute to local taxation. They would not, therefore, be placed in a peculiarly favourable position with regard to taxation. I was lately assured by a gentleman at the head of a large manufactory in Yorkshire, that many families employed in his works were earning in wages as much as £10 a week. The case of colliers and others earning £6 a week is still more frequent. These well-to-do operative families in the receipt of £500 or £300 a year are exempted from income-tax; why should not a similar favour be shown to the professional man or the shopkeeper, whose income is frequently much smaller?

It is sometimes assumed that the struggle of a middle-class family "to keep up appearances" is simply a form of snobbishness, an attempt to ape the customs of a wealthier class. It cannot be denied that this is frequently the case with those

whose incomes considerably surpass what is sufficient to provide even for a liberal interpretation of the term "necessaries of life." The attempt to make £1,000 a year look like £1,500 is generally pure snobbishness, and it would be well at once to recognise its futility; but this "keeping up of appearances" is a very different thing to the domestic economy practised by families with from £200 to £300 a year. With these every deduction from income means some real privation, some loss of food, clothing, education, or the recreation necessary to health of mind and body.

Reference has already been made to the comparatively large sum contributed by the poorer section of the middle class to local taxation. Clerks, professional men, and shopkeepers are compelled, in consequence of the nature of their avocations, to live in houses of a much higher rental than those usually occupied by the working class. It is not an extravagant estimate to assume that in London a family with £300 a year will be compelled to spend a sixth of their income, or £50 a year, in house-rent; whereas an artisan's rent does not usually amount to more than an eighth or ninth of his income. All local taxation is based on rental, and consequently the poor-rate, the general improvement rate, and the numerous other local burdens which almost daily spring into existence, fall with much more severity on the lower middle class than on the working class. This fact furnishes an additional argument for exempting incomes of less than £300 from income-tax.

Now that Mr. Gladstone has resumed the duties of Chancellor of the Exchequer, the public may look forward with confidence to the achievement of some much-needed financial reforms. The budget of 1874 will doubtless exhibit signs of the master's hand. The present time is, therefore, not inappropriate for the discussion of what I have endeavoured to show is a real grievance, patiently endured by a most useful and laborious class.

A PEEP AT THE HIGHLANDS.

IN TWO PARTS.—PART THE FIRST.



HE heat was fearful. What the thermometer may register in the Central Sahara, I know not; but in Blackstone Buildings, Chancery Court, Shamchester, it was something fabulous. The streets steamed as it were with heat. The air—air!—became an aggregate of fiery combustible atoms apparently; but in my "cabin'd, cribb'd, confin'd" office in Chancery Court it was, I repeat, something fabulous. Not therefore without pleasure was it that, one morning towards the close

of July, I found on my desk in the *aforsaid* den, perspiring in its own ill-smelling oleaginous postmarks, a brief epistle from my old friend Jack —, in his usual laconic style.

"Ravenswood, Argyleshire,
"July —"

"DEAR DICK.—Leave thy dismal office, and come up at once for a month, or I will never see thee more. Thine.

"JACK —"

Now Jack, as I knew, had rented this place for a few years for the shooting and fishing thereon. Moreover, he was a bachelor, and about my own

age. (Alas! my too-falkative hair-dresser frequently waxes eloquent now-a-days on the remedial properties of his washes, as he manipulates the centre of my pate!) So a few days found me whirling northwards from the seething city of Manchester, lying, as Bailey says, "like a monster in its own thick breath."

Through Preston, Lancaster, Penrith, Carlisle. Here let me breathe. Shall I ever forget that day? It was registered, I believe, as the hottest day known in England for very many years. The glass-roofed station at Carlisle was simply an oven, filled with a thirst-maddened, perspiring crowd, with dogs, guns, etc., *en route* for the moors. Why linger over the bottle of soda-water procured here at imminent risk of being left behind, and the horror of discovering that the cork could not be extracted? On—on!

"The day increased from heat to heat,
On stony drought and steaming sals."

As we crossed the border, the grass by the railway-side, brown and dry, was burning for miles, or had been previously burnt, and presented in the growing dusk a black and dismal appearance.

At length, about 10.30 p.m., our huge engine, which in the waning light looked the essence of incandescence, with the usual groaning and hissing of break and steam, and clanging of iron (accompaniments which always seem to me to intensify the heat), drew us into the station at Glasgow.

Glasgow is a fine city, and a large; but have the inhabitants agreed to burn all their water, and fry up a few million rotten eggs or so, this evening? Pah! Dear cabby, to the "Rainbow."

Let me draw a veil over that terrible night. I will only say this: I slept on what was, I believe, a spring mattress—slept! In the fearful heat I tossed and turned, cork-like, as on a sliding billow that yet clung to me with awesome tenacity. All night, immediately under my window, a cabman, a loud-voiced woman, and another, carried on an apparently interminable quarrel in broad husky Scotch.

Well, at last the night came to an end, and early in what might have been the "dewy morn," had there been any dew (save that of Glenlivet), I hastened on board the steamer *Iona*, advertised to sail daily to Ardrishaig, and then lying in the river near Buchanan Bridge. A fine steamer; rather too narrow perhaps for her great length, with well-furnished, comfortable saloon, over which was a hurricane-deck.

About 7 a.m., I think, we started, and as she slowly screwed her way through the thick pea-soupy Clyde, I soon discovered the secret of what had appeared to me overnight as a general cooking out of doors of a supper of bad eggs and bilgewater. It was neither more nor less than the

tide-moved water of that vast sewer, the Clyde itself.

Ding-dong! ding-dong! "Breakfast, ladies and gentlemen, in the saloon." So down I go, and in spite of that fearful night, and in spite of that hideous mephitic abomination that assails my olfactories through all the ports and windows of the boat, so lovely look, and so delicious taste, the large fat herring of Loch Fyne, that but short time is necessary for me to dispatch two of that ilk. Breakfast over, in a state of blissful repletion I ascend again to the upper deck, and establish an observatory.

As the *Iona* speeds onward, the hives of industry on the banks of the river make themselves known; and the gradual dawning upon the sight of the huge ribs of vessels in various stages of construction, and the wonderful clatter arising from thousands of hammers at work on iron plate and rivet, clearly indicate the situation of Glasgow's famous ship-building yards.

But now we leave these behind; the river widens; to the water-edge stretch down green fields, with cattle quietly browsing thereon, and here and there a handsome mansion set in well-wooded grounds. We are beginning to lose, too, thank Heaven! that Tartaric odour, and to feel hints once more of Zephyrus and Favonius.

The river has now widened considerably, till it forms a kind of estuary. What is this huge barren rock that rises up on my right, like a vast irregular pyramid? That is the famous Dumbarton Rock, or Castle, call it which you will. It rises perpendicularly from the water to a height of nine hundred feet, say the guide-books, and is noted chiefly as having been the prison of Wallace in the thirteenth century. It was the scene, too, of a remarkable event in the days of Mary, Queen of Scots, when a garrison in her interest held it. The enemy, wishing to surprise the garrison, made the attempt by night. A man on one of the scaling ladders was seized with epilepsy; the commander at once fastened him as he was, in his fit, to the ladder, the ladder was turned round, and the men coming up behind silently passed over him, and got possession of the castle.

These particulars may or may not be now passing through my idle brain; but what I do notice is the vast flock of birds that rises like a darkening cloud into the air as the steamer passes by.

Two miles further, and we approach Greenock on the left, an apparently flourishing town. Here the boat stops, and takes up a large number of passengers. Then the bell rings for a second breakfast.

From Greenock the river grows still wider for a distance, and the water becomes greener and clearer. Soon we pass Dunoon, a nice clean-looking town on our right, a favourite watering-

place for the people of Glasgow; and in a short time longer the *Iona* comes alongside the landing-stage at Rothesay, on our left. This town is very pleasantly situated on the Isle of Bute. In general effect it is like an amphitheatre of houses built round the small crescent-shaped bay, the ruins of the castle dominating the hill above. Altogether, Rothesay forms a pretty picture, with its climbing streets, wooded suburbs, and numbers of tiny white and brown-sailed craft flitting to and fro over its still waters.

From this point commence the Kyles of Bute, a narrow sea-channel separating the islands on the right from the mainland of Argyshire on the left. To one standing on deck and looking northwards, the steamer appears to enter a long reach, which certainly seems land-locked at the further end, the hills on either hand sloping down their verdurous tree-covered sides to the water's edge. Soon, however, we perceive that the narrow channel is not land-locked, as we thought, but suddenly swerves almost at right angles to its former course, when we enter another long reach having the same characteristics. Having heard so much in their praise, I must confess to a slight disappointment in these same Kyles. It was like threading your way through a watery maze, with a somewhat monotonous outline of horizon all round you. Emerging at length from their intricacies, the *Iona*, with a louder snort, and obedient to the touch of some spur from the grimy engineer below, as it might seem, screws on over widening waters, and leaving Cantyre on the left, enters Loch Fyne. This is indeed a beautiful reach of green sea, with well-wooded banks, and here and there a mansion standing back in the embowering foliage.

Now we stop a few moments at Tarbert, on our left, the small town from which the main fishing of the Fyne herrings is carried on; then on again, and are soon at anchor at Ardrishaig, the limit of the *Iona's* sail. And a scene of bustle and confusion it is; shouting and wrangling over boxes; passengers leaving the steamer involved and crushed amongst ditto going on board for the return sail. Luggage, sporting dogs, and stalwart Highlanders' bare legs, seem to me the most prominent objects on shore. One old Gael, apparently inarticulate with rage (or is it the "whuskey?"), seizes my portmanteau entirely against my will, carries it about six yards, and then demands something in unintelligible gutturals. He looks so much like a gibbering maniac that, to get rid of him, I produce sixpence.

Ardrishaig seems to possess but few houses. At one of them, the telegraph-office, I inquire for some vehicle to convey me to Ravenswood; but there is nothing of the kind in the place. However, they telegraph to Loch Gilphead, about two miles off, and I learn with satisfaction that a conveyance

will be sent to me immediately; and, indeed, as I saunter about, watching the *Iona* depart on her return to Glasgow, I can see the same coming along the high road in the far distance.

In due time it arrives. I mount to my seat beside the driver, and away we go. Over hill, through vale, now crossing some brawling stream pleasantly suggestive of trout, now catching a glimpse of the blue waters of some loch deep below, until, after about two hours' drive, we turn through a pair of iron gates, down a fine avenue of limes, and such wild fuchsia-trees as were a new experience to me, and over all I see the castellated towers of an old stone house. Not many moments, and a bronzed, bearded fellow, with meerschaum between his lips, has my hand in his own strong grasp.

"Welcome, old boy, to Ravenswood," says Jack:

Ravenswood—a name borrowed, no doubt, from Scott's magnificent though gloomy tale—may have been built some sixty years. It is of no great size, and consists of a central part and two wings built as towers, all of rough unpolished stone. The front entrance is mean, and a narrow stone staircase leads from it at once to the first floor, the basement storey being occupied by the kitchens and servants' rooms. The whole is very strongly though ruggedly built, no doubt to resist the tremendously boisterous weather experienced here in winter.

At present, as I pace about in my slippers in early morning, the scene is calm and peaceful in the extreme. The grass, and shrubs, and trees around me are wet with dew-drops which, like diamond-facets, reflect back the sun's light. Over the dark masses of a low-lying fir-wood, as yet untouched by the golden sunbeams, I can discern the sea, some half-mile distant, mirror-like, almost unrippled, stretching away into the far Atlantic. The immediate scenery is soft and pastoral, and almost English (the bare legs of the women and children, and the unintelligible Gaelic one hears, breaking the spell). The every-day work and sounds of farm-life are seen and heard; cattle are feeding, poultry cackling, and the stroke of the scythe passing through the yielding swathe falls in regular cadence on the ear. And the air—oh, the softness and sweetness of this Highland air! Simple existence in it is a pleasure.

I notice one feature, however, in the surroundings of the place which to me seems suggestive of uncomfortable and melancholy thoughts. Within the grounds of the house, indeed exactly opposite the front entrance, and within twenty yards of it, there is a small grave-yard, enclosed by a stone wall and iron gates. Within this enclosure are seen the memorial stones of many of the Ravenswood family who have been buried here. It is in fact, I suppose, the burial-place of the family. Custom and

habit dull the inner sense, no doubt, and render it less easily affected by external objects; but this sombre, grass-grown grave-yard always seemed to me to impart to the scene an element of gloom and depression. It is however a not uncommon fact, I believe, in the Highlands, for the family burial-place to be within the grounds of the family house.

Now how shall I commence the task I have set myself, to depict briefly a few scenes of the life we led during my month's holiday? First, let me say, Jack had with him here his sister, a widow, a fine, portly, good-tempered lady of some forty summers; her son Harry, a strapping young fellow of twenty; his friend and boon companion at Oxford, Charley Maurice; and, last but by no means least, her daughter Ethel, scarcely eighteen. Tennyson has described her in "The Brook":—

"Straight, but as lissome as a hazel wand;
Her eyes a bashful azure, and her hair
In glow and hue the chestnut, when the shell
Divides threefold to show the fruit within."

These, with Jack and myself, and a plentiful array of servants and helps, formed the household, and with these cheerful spirits the naturally gloomy Ravenswood was as gay as could be.

We rose somewhat early, breakfasted simply; Jack's rule, to do in Rome as the Romans do, leading him to commence that meal with oatmeal porridge, a delightful dish as made in Scotland, to which I soon found myself deeply attached. I soon became very partial, too, to a light and wholesome cake called "scones." Then Jack and I would stroll about, smoking a pipe, and arranging for the day's doings. To us on these occasions would

come up sounds of merriment from the stable-yard, in which, if I mistake not, I could distinguish the voices of Master Harry and his friend, and the silvery laughter of Miss Ethel.

Then we would drive or ride over the hills, a company of some half-dozen; down precipitous paths, whose rocky sides are clothed with nut-trees and yellow broom; over breadths of heather with its beautiful purple blossom; along the high roads leading over burn and brae. Or we would lounge down past the sombre fir-wood over fields whose velvet sward stretched down to the sea. Here was a large, safe boat, in which, having with much fun disposed ourselves, we would row out, in calm weather, for some half-mile, and then coast it, rejoicing, nay, exulting in the exhilarating lightness of the air, and the soft dash of the clear green water. Occasionally we should see a small seal basking on some outstanding rock, which on seeing us would quickly vanish, the gulls with their cat-like "mews" wheeling overhead. Now and then a gun would be taken with us in the boat, with a view to a wild duck or so. Then we should return home with keen appetite to our early dinner; after this usually a pipe and siesta, and then perhaps croquet, a game more suited, methinks, to young "spoonies" than grave old bachelors, and which some of our young friends appeared to be industriously turning to good account. After tea the post came in, bringing letters, newspapers, and magazines. These were eagerly sought and devoured, and then off we went again on some walking, or riding, or boating excursion until night-fall.

END OF PART THE FIRST.

HESTER MORLEY'S PROMISE.

BY HESBA STRETTON.

AUTHOR OF "THE DOCTOR'S DILEMMA," ETC. ETC.

CHAPTER THE FORTY-EIGHTH.

THE LAST MOMENT.

WHEN Carl told him that little Hester was gone to her mother, Robert believed that his child was lost to him altogether. He could not meet Rose in her husband's house; he could not visit even his child there. Mr. Waldron went every day to spend an hour or two with the little grand-daughter whom he could not acknowledge, but who fastened more closely about his heart. He spoke very gently to Rose, and with a reverence he had not accorded to her in the days when she had been a favourite with him, in spite of her girlish frivolity. The consecration of a great sin purified by a great sorrow was upon her. Now and then he addressed to her the few hearty words of fellowship and encouragement by which a true man, who is also a Christian, can

bind up the broken in spirit; but they did not converse much. The thoughts of both were centred upon the child whose life was swiftly running to its close. From the moment that she entered under John Morley's roof, they saw that her days were numbered; and on the morning of this day, when John Morley and Hester were hastening homewards, Grant counted the duration of her life by hours.

It was then that little Hester, growing conscious of a change in herself, began to think of all those who had made the last few months a holiday to her. Carl was gone away, and she should see him no more; but Annie could come to bid her farewell, and Robert Waldron, who had never been to see her since she had come to be with her mother. She asked Mr. Waldron himself, as he stooped over

her bed, the tears in his eyes, and a strange pressure upon his throat.

"Why doesn't he come?" she said; "he used to be very kind to me. If you'd only tell him little Hester is going to die very, very soon, I'm sure he'd come. I loved him very much; almost as much as Carl."

"He shall come to see you, my little child," said Mr. Waldron.

So Robert came at last; back to the pleasant room, where pleasant and guilty hours had passed

the day; and Robert, cradling her tenderly in his arms, had paced about the room, gathering up all the scattered memories which lay in ambush for him behind every familiar object upon which his eye rested. How he loathed himself! How he wondered at his own idiotic sin! With what sharp, unutterable pangs every word and moan of the dying child pierced him to the heart! The martyrdom was keener to him than to Rose, whose feebleness softened the anguish of her soul. She was going to follow very quickly; but he would live



"ON THE HEARTH-RUG AT HER FEET."

quickly for him and Rose—hours which had sown deadly seeds broadcast. He could not fly from it now; he could not make haste to leave it behind him. Hester—his child—was dying, and he was not coward enough to desert her death-bed. Rose was there, but he scarcely saw her, scarcely spoke to her. They met for the last time in the presence of their child, but they met as strangers; only one short, quick glance into one another's eyes told their tale of agony and repentance.

"Don't leave me again," moaned little Hester; "I shall die soon; and oh! I am very tired. Could you carry me about in your arms for a little while?"

This had been her cry from time to time during

for many years, with the image of a white face, and small emaciated limbs, and the echo of a little feeble voice, dwelling for ever in the depths of his memory.

It was this agony and passion of retribution that John Morley looked upon, himself unseen, and reading the whole story with his keen and quickened eyesight. There was Robert Waldron, his head bowed down over the form of his dying child, and his heavy feet treading to and fro under his burden, as his own had done in the room below, with a burden as heavy bending down his head. Rose had fallen asleep for sorrow, and was unconscious of the nearness of both of them. She was lying upon the sofa, with a shawl thrown over her; but

her head was uncovered, and the light fell upon it. He could see every line traced upon her corpse-like face. If one element of repentance consists in not thinking over again the sins of the pleasant past, it was long since Rose had ceased to dwell upon them. Her husband's heart yearned to her with a great pity, with a passionate tenderness which no other woman had ever stirred within him. She slept, and he would not have her awake. If she had been dead he would not have wished her alive again. But he had never loved her, never grieved for her as he did now.

It might have been that the bitter sigh which was in his heart rose unbidden to his lips, or that he or Hester made some movement of which they were unware; for Robert paused suddenly in his dreary march, and turned towards them, peering anxiously into the darkness. The child, too, lifted her feeble head and bent it forward. Hester could restrain herself no longer. With a swift and noiseless step, and with her finger raised in a gesture of silence, she glided into the room, leaving her father still standing without, and took the little child out of Robert's arms. Little Hester nestled down upon her lap, breathing a sigh of measureless content, and gazing up into the sweet face leaning over her with a sitting smile upon her own. Robert Waldron knelt down before them both, and felt that the supreme moment of his martyrdom had come.

"Dear Hester," murmured the child, "you are just in time. I've been here having my holidays before I die. But I'm going to die now, very quickly. Did you know, and are you come on purpose?"

"I did not know you were here, my darling," answered Hester; "this is my own home."

"Yes, I know," she said plaintively; "my mother told me you used to live here when you were as old as me. Was it then you knew my father?"

Hester's pitiful gaze was bent upon Robert, but he could not bear to meet it. He covered his eyes, and bowed his head until it almost rested upon her feet.

"Yes; it was then that I knew him," she answered very softly.

"I shall know him soon," said little Hester, in a tone of exultation—"very, very soon. I am going to heaven, and I shall see God there, and Jesus Christ, who loves little children so; but He won't be jealous if I love my father very, very much; because I've never known him here, and couldn't love him. You don't think God will be angry, do you, Hester?"

"No, no," she answered, the tears falling fast upon the child's thin hand.

"Hester! Hester!" cried Robert, in an accent of profound anguish.

"Which does he mean?" she asked, touching his bowed head playfully. "There are two of us

now. Is it me, or the other Hester, you are calling to? I don't know what we should do if I was going to live. But I'm very glad, after all, to be going to my own father."

She lay still for a few minutes as if exhausted, looking up to Hester with a gaze of utter satisfaction. Grant, whom Hester had not seen until then, came forward and shook his head gravely as he felt the failing pulse in the languid little wrist, which he put down gently after he had held it for a few seconds. The child turned her eyes away from Hester's face for a moment to look at him.

"You've all been very good to me," she murmured. "You've given me such holidays as I never thought of; but it is too late now, and I'm not sorry. I don't want anybody to be very sorry. —Shall you be very sorry?" she added, touching Robert's head again with her cold little hand.

His heart was dead within him, and he neither spoke nor lifted up his face, though she waited for an answer. Rose was awake now, and was creeping towards them, holding by the chairs to steady her failing and faltering steps; while John Morley looked on, seeing all, hearing every word of the child's dying voice, and comprehending every turn of the brief history which was ending thus.

"I don't know what to call you," said the child. "They have all names but you; and I love you very much. I think I love you as much as Carl. If my father had not died, perhaps he would have carried me about like you've done, in your arms. Are you so very tired that you cannot look at me?"

"He is not tired," said Hester, "he is too sorry to look at you."

"I don't want him to be so very sorry," she moaned, her lips quivering with grief; "nor anybody else—nor my mother. Tell him not to be like that, Hester. Tell him to look at us. I want to see his face again, because I love him."

"Robert," said Hester, "look at her."

Her voice was almost lost in sobs, and she laid her hand, as the child had done, upon his bowed head. He lifted it then, and glanced first at her, then at his little daughter, with a look of anguish such as she had never seen upon her father's face.

"Why!" faltered the child, in broken sentences, "do you think I love Carl the most now? I only loved him most because I knew him first. See, I love you quite as much. Kiss me, and let us be friends before I die. I wish I'd known you all my life, because then I'd have loved you most of all. But it wouldn't be right now, would it?"

She put her hand to his face, and was stroking it fondly; and Robert seized it, and held it passionately to his lips.

"You love me very much," she whispered, "very much. I wonder if my father would have loved me

any more ; but I shall soon know.—Why ! there's my mother leaning over our chair, Hester."

Hester had felt Rose beside her for the last minute, but she had not dared to stir, for fear of disturbing the easy position of the dying child. Rose spoke in a shrill yet feeble voice, which smote upon John Morley's ear.

"I must tell her," she cried. "Robert ! Hester ! I must tell her."

"No, no ! not now ! never, now !" answered Robert.

"Would you like to see your father before you die ?" asked Hester, bending more fondly over the little girl.

"I cannot," she said with a bright glance ; "he is waiting for me up in heaven. And my mother says she won't be very long. Let everybody kiss me quickly, for I am going."

She almost raised herself up on Hester's lap, and looked eagerly about her. Grant was standing before her, but she looked past him to the open doorway and the obscure passage beyond, where John Morley's white head stood out clearly in the gloom. She raised her hand slowly, pointing towards him ; and Rose, turning her eyes in that direction, saw the face of her husband looking towards her in this hour of his vengeance.

"Let him come first, and kiss me," said the child, in her dying voice.

John Morley advanced steadily into the room, with every eye fixed upon him intently ; Robert alone knowing nothing of what little Hester's words meant, for he had again bowed his head down almost to the ground at Hester's feet. Rose watched her husband, and Hester's imploring gaze never left his face. If there was any bitterness and rancour in his heart now, it would be there for ever. No punishment, no remorse could satisfy him if he was not satisfied at this moment. He did not look at Rose, but his eyes were fastened upon the small, wan face resting upon Hester's arm. The little face smiled up at him, and the little hands were stretched out to him.

"You would love me too, if you only knew me," she said ; "kiss me once before I die."

He stood between his wife and Robert Waldron now ; he could have laid a hand upon each of them. But he looked only at her, his eyes fast growing dim, and with an unspeakable compassion in his heart. Resting his hand upon Hester's shoulder, and stooping over Rose's dying child, he placed a long, gentle kiss upon her lips ; a kiss which meant more than any words could have told.

"My father will kiss me like that," murmured the failing voice ; and Robert raised himself up to look at her once more. The last moment was come. The last kiss her chilling lips could feel had been imprinted there by Rose's husband. He groped about with his hands for an instant, as if to

catch at some solid support, and then fell forward fainting at John Morley's feet.

For a moment no one stirred. John Morley leaned heavily upon Hester's shoulder ; but when Grant bent over the senseless form, he pushed him gently on one side, and stooping down, he raised Robert in his arms, with a woman's tenderness of touch, and carried him into his own room, and laid him upon his own bed.

CHAPTER THE FORTY-NINTH.

A FULL FORGIVENESS.

GRANT removed the dead child from Hester's lap, and bade her take Rose down-stairs to her father's sitting-room. Rose shed no tears, but appeared calm and almost apathetic. Hester, carrying a light in her trembling hand, led the way to the gloomy room where John Morley's life had been wasted. There was a chilly sense of vacancy about it then, for all the every-day confusion had been carefully put into frigid order by Lawson's mother. Hester set Rose down in the old chair on the hearth, and busied herself for some time in lighting the fire ; while she sat by, watching her movements with dull but tearless eyes. The rare, refined, beauty of Hester's face, pale with suppressed emotions, had never manifested itself as it did now. When the fire had burned up, she brought a foot-stool to the side of Rose, and sitting down wearily, laid her head upon her lap. The fond, daughter-like attitude, the sweetness of Hester's wan face, the utter oblivion of her step-mother's sin, roused her from her stupefaction. She laid both her hands upon Hester's head, and hiding her face upon them, burst into a passion of tears.

"Why are you so good to me ?" she cried. "Why was I ever born ? You would have been happier if you had never seen me, little Hetty. Oh, little Hetty ! little Hetty ! why did I ever come into this house to be a sorrow to you ? Oh, I did not think it would all end in this ! And yet you love me through it all !"

"Yes ; I love you dearly, poor mother," said Hester in her softest accents.

"Then you think God will love me in spite of all ?" murmured Rose.

"I am sure He does," she answered.

"And my husband ?" she continued in a voice of mingled entreaty and incredulity.

"Yes ; my father loves you," said Hester ; "he forgives you. He has come back knowing you were here. He is taking care of Robert Waldron now. Hush ! they are coming down-stairs."

They listened breathlessly to the sound of footsteps descending the staircase. Would they come in here, both John Morley and Robert Waldron, and meet Rose face to face ? She pressed her hand against her heart, praying silently to God to

spare her this trial. The door was open, and they could hear distinctly all that was passing in the old-fashioned entrance-hall. Grant had come down with them, and said he would walk home with Robert. Then Robert spoke in a troubled, scarcely articulate voice.

"John Morley," he said, "I have sinned grievously against you, and I can do nothing to atone for it to you. Yet I have suffered for my sin, and repented of it with a very bitter repentance. Can you pardon me?"

"As freely as God pardons us all," answered John Morley in a clear tone. "Yet it may be you will have to bear the consequences of your sin all your life long. But if at any time I can help you to bear that burden, by counsel, by sympathy, by prayer, come to me, and let us talk together as friend with friend. You are young yet; young enough to do good work in the world. God bless you and give you peace!"

There was a minute's silence in the outer room, and then the house-door closed upon Grant and Robert; and John Morley's foot took a step or two towards his own forsaken parlour. Hester looked up into Rose's face, and saw it flushed and kindled with a new light. He who had forgiven Robert freely, and with a blessing, was coming towards her, his wife, whom he had loved with a profound passion. Neither of them moved, except that Rose leaned back in the chair, with a strange flutter of hope and joy making her tremble. He came on, entered the room, and stood just within the threshold, looking sadly towards them, as they sat together in the red fire-light, upon his dishonoured hearth.

"Father!" cried Hester, rising from her footstool, and going towards him as he remained motionless at the door.

"Do not go," he said, laying his hand upon her arm; "do not leave us. You have ministered between us this long time past. Stay with us still."

"But speak to her," urged Hester; "tell her that you forgive her, too, freely."

She drew him on towards the hearth, her arm pressed about him with a tender force, until he stood opposite to Rose, and looked down upon her fair face, which in the red light had borrowed some of the bloom of her girlhood. Her blue eyes, glistening with unshed tears, were raised to him in speechless entreaty; and he met their gaze with an unspeakable pity in his own.

"Child," he said in a voice of trouble mingled with compassion, "I have just seen you pass through a woman's keenest sorrow."

"No, no," sobbed Rose, "no, no! That was not my keenest sorrow. I shall soon go to her. I am going to die."

"Yes," he said, still looking down upon her with a strange tenderness.

"Oh!" she cried, with a pitiful wail in her feeble voice, "if I could only do something to atone for it—to make you believe that I love you! I was such a silly, weak creature; I did not know then how much better your love was than his. You did love me before I was so wicked, didn't you?"

"Love you!" he echoed.

"Yes, I know it," she continued, wringing her hands. "I knew it as soon as I had forsaken you. Don't think I was ever happy. He was kind, but every word he spoke was a reproach to me. I had a little child, but she scarcely belonged to me; I could not let her live with me; I never nursed her; we never played together, like little Hetty and I used to play together, just after you married me. Do you remember? Oh, that was so happy! I feel as if I had been in heaven once, and fallen down, down, down into a pit of darkness. Shall we know each other in heaven, do you think?"

"I think we shall," said John Morley's ruthless voice.

"Is it better for me to die than to live?" she asked imploringly.

"God thinks it best," he answered.

"If I had lived," she went on, "could you so have forgiven me that you could take me quite back again to you, as your wife, whom you loved and trusted as in the time before I deceived you? I don't think anybody could love you as I would. Oh, how I would wait and watch to please you! Could you have forgiven me so?"

"No," said John Morley, his whole heart yearning towards her, yet knowing that it was her doom so plainly read upon her face, which made it possible for him to keep her under his roof during the short span still remaining to her of life. The complication which he had dreaded when he heard that Rose was living was already disentangled. He would not be compelled to put her from him, against the softening of his love and the urgent pleas of her penitence. He could see that a few weeks, or months it might be, remained during which she could still be with him, and he could look upon her and listen to her beloved voice, without any wrong done to his own conscience and his sense of righteousness. It was a great boon from the God he had distrusted.

"Child," he said—and from that time he called her by no other name—"I love you wondrously, and therefore I thank God that He is going to call you home to Himself. I could not have taken you back living to my inmost heart, and to the wifehood which was your right once. But, dying, I can shelter you here, within my own house, upon my own hearth, where Hester's mother died many years ago. And in my very heart of hearts I can cherish the memory of you, coming home at last, weary of your long exile and sin, comforted by my tenderness, and passing away under my protection.

Give thanks, my poor child, that your probation upon earth is nearly ended."

Rose had lifted herself painfully and feebly from her chair, and stood opposite to him, listening with parted lips and beseeching eyes to his words, uttered in a voice of passionate affection. She could not altogether understand him yet, any more than she had done in those far-off times when he had seemed very high above her girlish comprehension. But she knew that he loved her and had forgiven her; he would not banish her again from the home from which she had fled, being easily tempted. As a child, whose intelligence cannot grasp all the meaning of its own fault and the pardon given to it, hides its childish tears in the bosom of its mother, Rose stretched out her arms to her husband. He hesitated for a moment, a hesitation which she did not see, and then drew her towards him, and laid her head upon his breast.

CHAPTER THE FIFTIETH.

CARL'S HOUR.

CARL was exactly twenty-four hours behind John Morley and Hester, on their rapid journey homewards. At Paris he learned, through an interpreter, that two such travellers had passed through the day before, and had gone on direct for England. The station-master at Little Aston informed him mysteriously that there was a rumour in the town of Mr. Morley and his daughter having taken possession of their house again, and that there was certainly a lady with them, whom people believed to be no other than Mrs. Morley herself. Carl's anxiety fell from him in a moment. Hester was safe and at home again! He could not give a thought either to Rose or her husband. Leaving his portmanteau on the platform as a thing unworthy of his recollection, he rushed with precipitate headlong haste to John Morley's house, haggard, dusty, and travel-stained, with eyes dull for want of sleep, and tangled hair falling in disorder about his careworn face. There was no difficulty in gaining admission; the house-door could be opened from the outside by simply turning the handle. He could not stay to knock. He paused no longer at the closed door of John Morley's parlour, but flung it open and strode in, with all the irresistible impatience which had been kept in check so long.

It had not been an idle day for Hester. There was no servant in the house, and though Lawson's mother did her best, and had been closely at work since the morning, many things had fallen to Hester's lot to do. Up-stairs in Rose's drawing-room, sunny and pleasant, lay the dead form of the lovely little child, whose holidays had come too late to save her; and Hester's gentle hands had given to the room an air of soft tender repose, well suited to the peacefulness of little Hester's slumbers. Mr.

Waldron and Robert had been in during the day to look at her for the last time; for to-morrow she was to be buried in a quiet church-yard a mile or two away from Little Aston, with John Morley and Grant alone to follow her to the grave. In the dark parlour below, Rose had rested in the great chair on her husband's hearth, waited on by him with a marvellous carefulness and foresight. A singular and solemn satisfaction seemed to pervade the house.

It was night again now; almost the hour when Hester and her father had stolen in home the evening before. Rose was in bed, and had fallen asleep calmly. John Morley was gone to his own chamber; and Hester was alone in the parlour, watching the fire die out in the grate, and the light grow fainter about the crevices and corners of the walls. Robert had told her that Carl was gone to Burgundy in quest of her; and she was taking time now to follow him in his journey with somewhat troubled thoughts. What would he do there in that remote little town, where nobody knew a word of English? How could he find out what had become of them? Would it come into his mind to think that the *cure* would understand Latin, and could communicate with him in that language? Or would he wander about disconsolate and perplexed, seeking traces of her, and being unable to discover them? Of course it could not be for long; but she felt very much disturbed for him. How greatly he would be grieved that the little child had died while he was absent!

Hester's thoughts had reached this point when Carl made his abrupt entrance. He did not know what or whom he had expected to find beyond the closed door of John Morley's parlour. But he was not at all prepared to come upon Hester sitting all alone in the dim firelight, surrounded by the hush and stillness of a house which he had almost expected to find full of stir and tumult. It was several months since he had seen her, and the thought of her had grown almost a mocking and haunting fancy. Until very recently he had lived on in the belief that she was dwelling in some hiding-place very near to him, and that he might chance to cross her path any hour of any day. For the last few days he had been in eager pursuit of her, and had lost her like a shadow. Now she sat in the dusky light, looking into the embers, but starting to her feet the instant that he strode into the room, and seeming ready to take flight again. He forgot that no word of love had ever crossed his lips to meet Hester's ear. She belonged to him by right of his great love and his great anxiety. He clasped her passionately in his arms, and laying his head down on hers, was speechless in the presence of his great joy.

"Carl," said Hester, lifting her hand to his face with one of the sweetest caresses a girl can give, "I am safe; I am come back. My father and I are at home again."

She made no effort to withdraw herself from his encircling arms, or to affect a maidenly reserve. Presently Carl released her himself, only keeping her hand in his, as they stood side by side on the hearth, and he looked down upon her eagerly and with restrained delight. The smouldering fire shot up a friendly little blaze, whose light played about her delicate face, now tinged with a soft flush. She trembled a little; her fingers quivered in his clasp; the breath came fluttering through her parted lips. He could not break the delicious silence which had fallen upon them.

"Carl," faltered Hester, "little Hester is dead!"

He understood what she told him; he even felt a passing pain at hearing that the child had died so soon; but it only gave another touch, like the unison note in music, to his perfect happiness. The tears shone upon Hester's long eyelashes; and he bent down and kissed them away.

"You know I love you," he said, in a tone half of apology and half of appropriation.

"Yes, I know," whispered Hester, her eyelids closed, as he had left them when his lips had been laid against them.

"And you love me?" he said.

"Yes, I love you," she whispered again.

"Hester," he said, with a man's quick jealousy, "look me in the face, and tell me that you never loved anybody but me."

"How could I?" she asked, raising her eyelids but a little, and keeping her eyes upon the ground. "You know how few people I have ever seen. You, and Grant, and——"

"Robert Waldron," he added, as she paused.

"Yes! I understand; I know. I had no chance against a man like him. But then why did you not accept him, Hester? Only a few people, like your father, and me, and those who believe that there are many better and nobler and greater things than wealth, only we should have thought you had sacrificed the higher for the lower. He loved you as passionately, nearly as purely, as I do. You are free to change yet. You may leave me, and I will not utter a reproval. You will be very grand, very rich; and he said once to me that you were born for such a man as he can give you. I am, compared to him, a poor man, and must be always poor. I have not even a home to offer you yet. I wish I had not kissed you, Hester. I beg your pardon for taking you in my arms. It was my surprise which overpowered me. Good heavens! why do you neither speak nor look at me?"

She had been standing beside him as he poured out his rapid words, perfectly motionless, with her eyes still bent upon the ground. The instinctive coquetry of a woman who is sure she is beloved was playing about her heart, and teaching her the innocent artifices which go far in befooling men. She let him run on in his jealous outpouring with-

out interposing a glance or a word; but when he stopped, she lifted up her eyes to his face, with a glance in them which he could not misunderstand.

"How foolish you are, Carl!" were the words she uttered.

"Then you never loved anybody but me?" he persisted.

"Never!" she repeated, tightening her fingers about his hand.

Carl was afraid of stirring, lest she should release her hand from his, and sit down apart from him, and whenever she moved he held her more closely. The small flame died away, and the room grew very dark indeed, with no light except that which came through the open door from the lamp in the old house-place. They had said but very little to one another, when a clear, shrill, foreign voice caused Carl to start violently.

"Mademoiselle Hester, my angel," said Madame Lawson, "I must run away to my house for a little half-hour. Is there anybody talking with you?"

"It is only Lawson's mother," whispered Hester; "I must go out to her for a minute."

She was away for several minutes, and came back with the lamp in her hand. Then Carl sighed a profound sigh. The exquisite moment was gone, and could never return. Yet he had not time to mourn over it; for though Hester seated herself in her own chair, she did not forbid him to stretch himself on the hearth-rug at her feet, where her downcast eyes could not fail to fall upon him.

"Oh, Hester!" he cried, with a sudden sorrow coming across his joy, "so that little child is dead! If I had not found you again, my dear love, if you had been altogether lost to me, that little Hester would have been dearer to me than any one else in the world. Do you know that she loved you very dearly, and pined to see you once again? If you had but been at home in time to see her!"

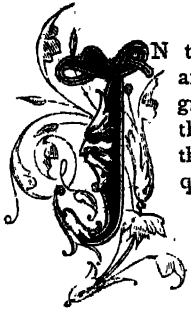
"I did see her. She died in my arms," said Hester in a sorrowful voice.

"God bless you!" answered Carl, pressing his lips to the arms in which Rose's child had died.

"Let me tell you all about it," she said, looking down shyly upon his radiant face, for he could not keep his grief in mind whilst he was gazing up at her. "My father and Rose are reconciled to one another!"

She told him the whole history in low, quiet, timid tones, with fitful blushes and tears, which she did not wish him to see, and which he appeared not to notice. He did not interrupt her, listening in a rapture and reverie of love, which made him willing to lie there for hours, hearing no sound but her dear voice, and seeing nothing but her dear face. Madame Lawson's little half-hour proved to be a very long one; but neither of them was conscious of its length.

SPIRIT POLISH.



IN the late war between the French and Germans, the sympathies of a great many English people went with the former, not because they were in the right—for of the merits of the quarrel they felt themselves utterly unable to judge—nor through any lack of appreciation of the German intellect and character, but simply because, when travelling on the Continent, German officials were always rude, and French officials always polite to them. Now this kindly feeling did the losing side no military good, it is true, for we cannot be expected to go to war and quadruple our debt, when our own interests are not involved; but we may hope that our contributions did something to alleviate the misery into which large masses of the peasantry found themselves plunged, and that the truth of the proverb which affirms that nothing is ever lost by politeness was vindicated.

Our grandfathers used to sneer at the courtesy which distinguished the manners of more polished peoples, and as they were generally at deadly feud with Spaniards or Frenchmen, their jests and caricatures were excusable enough. But happily they learned while they laughed, and took the polish which they affected to despise. Yet even at the present day you meet with people who put a theoretical value on rudeness, and associate a courteous demeanour with fickleness and incapability of deep affection. Because the hardest stones take the best polish, they imagine that a similar rule applies to the human heart, which is pushing the metaphorical use of the word "polish" rather too far. If a man is selfish and unfeeling by nature, it certainly will not make him any the less so to cultivate a rough and boorish manner, while the habit of restraint necessitated by wearing a mask of politeness must have a tendency to check the growth of his baser instincts, and it certainly prevents his being the nuisance he otherwise would be to casual acquaintances.

I do not believe in roughness being a sign of honesty. When a rude fellow does a civil thing, it makes a great impression on you, because it is unexpected, while you form a higher estimate of a pleasant companion's probable conduct, and call him a smooth-tongued hypocrite if he does not come up to it.

"Scratch the Russian, and you will find the Tartar," says—Voltaire, I think. But don't scratch the Russian, and you will pass a delightful evening with him; while the unvarnished Tartar would cat

your candles, and pistol you if you objected. Give me the Russian.

I own that I esteem the growth of politeness between man and man to be the greatest advantage of the age we live in. I could do very well without railways, steamboats, or electric telegraphs, but to have people always treading on my moral corns would make life odious. I do not believe in bluntness; the proper thing to be done with a rough diamond, in my estimation, is to cut it.

I grant that the desire to make himself agreeable will occasionally betray a man into rash offers of service, which he afterwards finds it inconvenient or impossible to fulfil. Irishmen in particular are subject to this generous impetuosity, which sometimes leads the cooler Englishman or Scotchman to tax them with insincerity. But this is a harsh and unjust judgment. When the Hibernian gentleman with whom you fraternise in a railway carriage, or on a Swiss mountain, offers to board, lodge, and mount you during the next hunting season, if you will look him up at his little place in Galway, he is not humbugging you; he is speaking recklessly, perhaps, but the impulse which causes him to do so is generous. If you accepted his invitation, indeed, he would probably recollect neither it nor you; and as for doing all he promised, the chances are that it would not be in his power, though he would certainly try his best. But who in his senses ever accepts general invitations? You have spent a happy day with a pleasant companion, who has set you at ease with yourself by appreciating your society, and whose polite regret to part from you has been expressed in the form of an invitation to renew the acquaintanceship. What more could you wish for? Would you sooner pass the time with a grumbler, or a snob, who feared to compromise himself by talking freely to a stranger who might, for all he knew, be plebeian in his connections?

Good manners benefit the possessor as well as those with whom he comes into contact; for many a man who seems to be a bore at first, and who is therefore dropped by the unamiable after a sentence or two, proves to be a most excellent and entertaining companion to him who, out of sheer civility, encourages him. He is like many fine clarets, *vin ordinaire* while cold, and requiring warmth to bring out the bouquet.

The man of really good manners is polite at home as well as abroad. I hate (don't you?) to see one who is all civility to strangers, rough and bearish to his wife, his sisters, or his children; and yet it is common enough. The man is not wanting in affection, but courtesy is irksome to

him, and so he throws it off with his boots, and puts on rudeness with his slippers. He will tell you perhaps that he means no harm, it is only his manner. That may be, but it is a very bad manner, and causes more domestic misery than anything else.

[N.B.—These remarks are not altogether inapplicable to ladies.]

Another real test of good manners is the ability to retain the polish at times of peril, anger, or excitement. Readers of Captain Marryat's delightful stories will remember how Midshipman Easy apologised to Gascoigne for the necessary roughness he employed in saving his life, surely a marvellous stroke in hitting off the character of that eccentric but thorough gentleman. The famous "Gentlemen of the Guard, fire first," is also well known, but there is a story told of Spanish politeness which may probably not be so familiar. When the ruins of Lisbon were cleared after the famous earthquake, the skeletons of two dons were discovered in a doorway, hat in hand, and bowing

to one another. They had evidently meditated escape from the house on the first shock, had met in the passage, and each being too polite to pass out before the other, they had perished together. So it seems that even civility must have its martyrs.

But of all the anecdotes in illustration of my subject which I could produce, were readers more patient, that which charms me most is a French one. A citizen of that polished country had unfortunately done something which necessitated his being hanged, and as there was no professional executioner available for the occasion, the painful duty of carrying out the sentence devolved upon an amateur, who apologised for any possible shortcomings to the person principally concerned.

"I hope you will pardon me," said he, "if I put you to any unnecessary inconvenience, but the fact is, I have never hanged any one before."

"Pray do not mention it," replied the other; "for that matter, I have never been hanged before. We must each do our best." LEWIS HOUGH.

FROM TOWN.

BY W. C. BENNETT



WAY, my thoughts, away—
We'll from the town to-day!
Yes, we the quiet hours will know
That tranquil Nature can bestow
Where green hills rise, and rivers flow
And landscapes stretch away
To cackling skies that all below
Round in with airy grey.
Away, my thoughts, away—
We'll from the town to-day!

Oh, joy to be away
From the hot town to-day!
To feel the grass beneath my feet,
To feel the skies my bluest eyes meet;
Oh! but it makes my heart to beat,
To feel how far away
Are care and toil, the loud, full street,
And the dim City day!
Oh, joy to be away
From the hot town to-day!

Oh, joy, I am away
From the dull town to-day!
Now, stretched at length, I thoughtless rest,
My careless head thrown back, and prest
Upon that pillow it loves best,
The green, sweet meadow grass;
While, with the sultry quiet blest,
I watch the slow clouds pass
Oh, joy, I am away
From the dull town to-day!

Oh, bliss, I'm far away
From London's roar to-day!
Beneath the worn, wild cliffs I please
My eyes with sight of mighty seas
Swept shorewards by the whistling breeze,
And feel the salt sea-spray
Beat on my face, and breathe in ease
While the gusts 'gainst me play.
Oh, bliss, I'm far away
From London's roar to-day!

Oh, bliss, I'm far away
From the vexed town to-day!
Now, on some grassy meadow stream,
I watch the play of shade and gleam,
And see the placid angler dream
The quiet hours away,
While all things men most strive for seem
Not worth a thought to-day.
Oh, bliss, I'm far away
From the vexed town to-day!


Oh, bliss, I'm far away
From toil and care to-day!
Now on some mighty mountain's side
I see the mists of morning slide
From the wide landscape, still more wide
Stretching each step I go,
Far lakes, and vales, and seas descried
In sunlight bathed below.
So bear me far away,
Blest Fancy, many a day!

STANLEY FARM.

TWO PICTURES.



"ARE BROKE TO SILVERN STREAKS."


 OME, love, and while the landscape glows
 Red in the setting sun,
 Let us repair to Stanley Farm,
 Where thou wert wooed and won.

The River runs through a narrow glen,
 And shooting past the mill,
 It prattles past the burial-ground,
 Where the village dead lie still.

Narrow and fresh it shooteth through
 The bridge at headlong speed ;
 But when the village bridge is past,
 It comes to marsh and mead ;

And broadening out with slacken'd pace,
 It fringes green flat land,
 Where, blanch'd white by frequent floods,
 Long lines of pollards stand.

And now within its shallow pools
 The blue-winged heron doth wade,
 Still as a stone, with crooked neck
 Above his floating shade.

And water-lilies fringe the brim,
 And all is sedge and reed,
 Save one small stream within the midst,
 That winds and winds with speed.

Then down comes Thornby Burn and gains
 The River with a cry,
 And on the two together run,
 Under the English sky.

And strong and deep the stream has grown,
 As well as broad and wide,
 On reaching Stanley Farm, that sits
 Upon the water's side.

How still it is ! how bright it is,
 These happy summer weeks,
 When cattle wade, and the dark blue pools
 Are broke to silvern streaks !

But, love, hast thou forgot the Yule,
 Twenty long years ago ?
 The level meads around the stream
 Were white with ice and snow.

The River was frozen white and blue,
 In its cold weedy bed ;
 A deep black fog filled all the air,
 And in the fog, o'erhead,

Just hovering close to earth, as small
 As a schoolboy's pink balloon,
 The wandering Sun looked small and cold
 As the red wintry Moon.

The fog was dark, and darkest there
 Above the River's bed,
 And from the windows of the farm,
 All day the lights gleamed red.

But when the Sun's ball rolled from sight,
 The wind began to blow,
 The chilly fog was cleft in twain,
 And the Moon lit up the snow !

Like a deep blue flower with a golden heart,
 Hung downwards, was the sky,
 And white and cold in swathes of snow
 Did mead and hamlet lie.

And ever and anon the wind
 Blew up a cloud so pale,
 And held it o'er the yellow Moon,
 Like a thin lawnly veil.

And the Moon looked through with dimmer gaze,
 And breath'd there soft and low ;
 Till, melted with her breath, the cloud
 Was shriven into Snow.

And ever in the brightening beam,
 As each small cloud passed by,
 We saw dark figures on the stream
 Gliding with merry cry.

Men and maidens, old and young,
 The skaters frolicked there ;
 Like shapes within a dream, their forms
 Stole through the mystic air.

But thy small hand was linked in mine,
 And down the stream we sped,
 Until we found a silent place
 Where those soft words were said

Which made us one ; the hour, the place,
 All seem a dream this day—
 But see ! there sitteth Stanley Farm
 In the red sunset ray !

There sits the farm, there steals the stream,
 And all looks young and fair ;
 The winter *now* is on our lives,
 The Snow upon our hair !

ROBERT BUCHANAN.

A PEEP AT THE HIGHLANDS.

IN TWO PARTS.—PART THE SECOND.



ON wet evenings concerts would be im-
 proved, which, as we had many good
 voices amongst us were very enjoy-
 able. This usually terminated with
 a dance or two, when Jack and I
 retired to the library for our concluding pipe and
 modicum of whiskey and water. On these oc-
 casions we discussed politics with an utter disre-
 gard of any opinions of the Imperial Parliament,

argued points in the paper as to a new breech-
 loader, or what not, speculated on the probabilities
 of the coming 12th, and shortly after ten retired to
 our respective couches ; and Ravenswood was soon
 as still as slumber, save for that measured cadence
 which the sea brings to all within its hearing for
 evermore.

Ravenswood was just the house for a ghost ; and
 after a few days I found out that it possessed one.

It appears the ghost of old Admiral C—who had died there, occasionally promenaded the scene of his former habitation. But I regret that I am unable to give a sensational account of any such phenomenon, as nothing of the kind occurred during my visit. One night, however, I was much disturbed, and kept awake until early morning, by hearing the most unearthly shrieks and cries proceeding from beneath my window outside. A fiend in torture could not have uttered more terrible sounds. In the morning I discovered that a large iron trap, set by a keeper for other quarry, had unfortunately closed its grim jaws upon the leg of one of the fine house-cats, whose futile attempts to extricate itself had given rise to the horrible shrieks above mentioned.

One day we went for a picnic up into the hills, to a fresh-water loch with an unpronounceable name, famous for its fine large trout. In preparing for this event there was great fun, and when the actual excursion came off, still greater. As our way lay over bog and hill and moor, the road would have been utterly destructive of the springs of a light vehicle; so, after driving a certain distance, the carriage was sent back, and the ladies, with the hampers, etc., were taken into a stout springless cart, and the men walked. Sometimes the wheels of the cart stuck so fast in the yielding bog, that all our efforts were required to extricate them. This part of our way was certainly a fearful bit of pedestrianism, and the jolting of the cart must have been almost as hard work for the ladies. After a while, however, we reached what might with greater truth be called *terra firma*, in the shape of "ever-highering" green mamelons, until at last, about noon of a clear sunny day, we found ourselves on the highest point, and on the margin of a small lake of very clear, deep-looking water. Here we bivouacked. We were still within the domains of Ravenswood, and found a boat belonging to the house on the lake. This was soon pushed out, and with an apparatus of lines and corks, baited with artificial flies, two or three of us were deputed to furnish the larder with fish. One rowed the boat while the others fished, and we had not crossed the loch once before we had half a dozen large trout secure at the bottom of the boat, and a similar number were drawn in on the return row.

Meanwhile a fire had been kindled by the men (we had brought coals), and was now burning briskly. Jack at once established himself *chef de cuisine*, and in the course of half an hour a repast of delicious fried trout was sent round gipsy fashion; the champagne corks flew gaily, and all went well.

Whether it was that the fine whetstone of air and exercise sharpened the razor of my appetite, or the novel circumstance of helping to cook my own dinner, or the spell and attraction all around me,

in place, time, and company, this I say—never banquet to me seemed half so sumptuous and superb. Afterwards, of course, the eternal pipe, during which I felt much as the lotus-eater did—

"When deep asleep he seemed, yet all awake,
And music in his ears his beating heart did make."

But time and the hour run through the pleasantest as well as the darkest day, and it is time to be collecting ourselves for a return. The horses are put to the cart, the kitchen utensils, etc., are gathered together, but where are the ladies and their attendants? Oh, here are Harry and his mamma, and here too are Maurice and Miss Ethel—coming from quite an opposite direction, though. Ha! ha! And soon, in the early evening, with the sun westerling towards the islands yonder in the far-off sea, over the trembling surface of which his ruddy gold stretches like a glittering pavement, we are descending the track up which we came this morning; and in some two hours, with all the hues of a brilliant sunset about us in earth and sky, we come through Ravenswood gates in the deepening twilight, and Jack's cheery voice, rousing, methinks, the somewhat pensive Ethel, reminds us that we are at home once more.

And now there are signs all around as of the coming of some momentous event. The old game-keeper, Angus, is oftener to be met with about the house, and wears an air of greater importance on his face. Shooting-boots are being produced and got in order; the gun-room is a scene of much noise and laughter, and cleaning of guns, amidst which Miss Ethel often deigns to visit us; the dogs are more closely looked to; and when to-morrow dawns it will be the festival of St. Grouse—the famous 12th.

An early plunge 'into' the strong and extremely cold water of the loch is no bad preparation for the contemplated toils of the day, so I indulge in one; and having breakfasted, find myself one of a party of four, well armed with breech-loaders, with old Angus, whip in hand, and the two dogs, Venn and Shot, slowly wending our way through the village to the foot of the hills we see before us.

A beautiful clear morning it is, and we are all in high spirits. That nip of whiskey, your true Highlander's usual "morning," may have contributed somewhat to this enviable condition.

Passing over a field or two, Angus throws off the dogs, which immediately range forwards, nose to ground.

I know of few things more delightful than a day out on the hills after grouse in fine weather. First, you have the exhilarating effect of the pure, clear air; then, if you are well and suitably shod, the mere locomotion over the heather (though sometimes, I admit, stiff work) is in itself pleasurable; then there is the excitement of looking for and

finding the game. As our two dogs lead on ahead, after their fashion, leaving few clumps of heath un-nosed, he must be of sluggish and slow temperament indeed who does not feel his pulse quicken with a pleasant excitement. But hark!

"Ho! ho!" Thus the keeper, in a peculiarly soft low monotone, which at once attracts the attention. The dogs, a considerable distance apart, are quite stone-still, one staring at the other, that stands with tail straight, nose to ground, and fore-foot raised. She waits thus till the guns coming on behind are almost up to her, when, slowly and cautiously, she steps forward again into the deeper heather; the action of her nose is more rapid, when—"Whirr-r-r!" with as many "r's" as the printer likes to give me, to express what to the novice is always somewhat startling—the uprising of the birds from their covert. "Bang! bang!" etc. A right and left from Jack's two barrels, one a-piece to the others—not a bad beginning. No one stirs; all reload; dogs sitting on their haunches from the moment the birds rose. Then we go on again; old Angus picks up the dead birds, and rams them into the game-bag he carries—said bag being of leather, with string-netted side.

As we advance, the blossoming clumps of heather show in the forward distance like a purple sea.

"Ho! ho!" Again that peculiar monotone, and again, with fingers on triggers, we slowly and noiselessly draw to where Venn and Shot are pointing, then "whirr-r-r" again, and "bang! bang!" but this time not so bad for the grouse.

But all this occupies a longer time in reality than it does to relate it, and the sun has now passed the meridian some hour or so.

"Forward, young James, and let us see the contents of thy knapsack." Cold chicken—ox-tongue—bread. Good! Seating ourselves on some of the many large stones with which the moors seem to abound, we fall-to.

Great guns at grouse—by which I mean men who go in for killing as many birds as possible (perhaps with a view to game-dealing!)—barely stop, I am told, to take a bite in the way of luncheon. Not so with us, however. If Jack can get birds enough to supply his friends with a brace or two, and himself with the same, he is not the man to devote himself to their indiscriminate slaughter. So, what with discussing the good fare provided for us by the ladies, and listening to the tales old Angus would tell—tales relating some Munchausen-like exploits in the way of shooting on these moors at some remote period—what with this, and the whiskey, and the tobacco, the sun was casting much longer shadows when we were again in harness, and ready for the sport. A fair bag, on the whole, was ours, as, extremely tired (I can answer for myself), we slowly returned home, somewhat late in the evening.

Many most pleasant days of a similar kind followed. Sometimes the ladies would arrange to meet us in the carriage with luncheon, at a certain time and place. These meetings, I need not say, were delightful to all of us, and I observed that on such occasions, as a rule, the grouse were not much molested after luncheon. With such experience, in the course of a week or so, I had so far improved as a shot, as to be able frequently to bring down my two birds with a double-barrel, and walk my twenty miles or more with the best of them.

Meanwhile, the post has brought me of late sundry epistles from my confidential clerk (poor fellow, I suppose *he* will be looking out for his holiday soon), suggesting the desirability of certain parchments in Chancery Court being attended to.

"Oh, hang the office!" says Jack, when I mention the matter; "let it go for a week longer. You cannot go yet—must stay over the grand doings at Dunchase next week, when the young laird comes of age."

Being nothing loth, I need but little persuasion. So, for a few days longer, I give myself up entirely to the charms of the luxurious, idle life I am leading. Well, idle? Peradventure not. At least, if the fact of two pairs of boots worn out in the course of a month means anything, it certainly does not mean sloth in the way of locomotion. No; I opine that, though to some extent aimless (except in the grand object of renewing health and strength), my life of late has been anything but an idle one. So a week more is spent in hard walks after grouse over moorland and bog, rowing and fishing on the lochs, riding and driving; early mornings occupied in a saunter down to the sea, a plunge therein, and return; hot noons passed on heather or in glen; cool dewy nights in loitering from the drawing-room—where a small concert has been perhaps extemporised—through the French windows into the grounds without, now redolent of floral perfumes and all manner of aromatic odours that, if he could but seize their subtle properties, would speedily make a perfumer's fortune.

At such times, unto me smoking my bachelor pipe under the umbrageous elms, a shaft of white moonlight, coming through some rift in the green canopy, will often discover two forms in the distance, one of which, in its undulating outline and springy motion, I have no difficulty in assigning to Miss Ethel. Well, well, *heu fugaces!* and "bless ye, my children," as the gushing Paterfamilias always says in the modern domestic drama.

The day fixed for the revels at Dunchase having duly arrived, and Jack having received a most kindly invitation for all his household, we started for the spot soon after breakfast, a merry, not to say hilarious party.

Dunchase was distant some ten miles from Ravenswood, across a loch about two miles broad.

When we got there we found the whole neighbourhood *en fête*, as the French say. There were triumphal arches and floral decorations on all the roads leading up to the house, an antique castellated structure. The old laird, a fine hale gentleman, and his son, the hero of the day, both dressed in full Highland costume, received us most courteously, and we were soon quite at home amongst the numerous visitors with whom the house was filled.

How can I describe in detail the events of the day? There was a grand banquet in a large marquee on the lawn, during which a good brass band, cunningly placed out of sight, discoursed sweet music, whilst at intervals the monotonous hum and piercing notes of the bagpipes fell upon the ear. Out of Scotland, I think, bagpipes are not popular. Still I feel bound to say that in a mountainous country, in the open air, and at a distance, when well played, they seem somehow not out of keeping with the scene; and if ever as a musical instrument they may be tolerated, it is under these conditions.

Well, all day long the banquetings and music continued, and the scene altogether was animated and peculiar; the Highland costume, in which most of the men were habited, with the various hues of the different tartans, imparting to it a unique if semi-barbarous appearance.

In the evening the tenantry and servants were feasted, and held games in a neighbouring field. Here the strength that mountain air and simple living can produce was shown to perfection, many a stalwart Scot displaying, as it seemed to me, the "thews of Anakim." Then came dancing in a large barn; none of your easy-gliding southern waltzes or polkas; but genuine heel-and-toe exertion, your work cut out for you, and no mistake.

Suddenly, at the piercing notes of the pipes, the

men spring up, seize their parthers, and are off. As the dance progresses, it quickens; the piper at last becomes mad, the dancers catch the infection, and in a whirl of motion and excitement, the dance comes to an end.

At length our party, much delighted with what we have seen, and the princely hospitality of our entertainers, start for home. As it is somewhat late, we think it better not to cross the water, but to make a slight détour round the head of the loch. This turns out to be an extremely beautiful drive. In the sweet gloaming "the lift aboon"—as the Scotch so poetically call the arch of the heavens (the Greek *κύκλος ἄνω*)—is beginning to coruscate with points of quivering gold. I know not what colours of beauty are all blended together in the upper horizon. A three-masted ship lies motionless on the many-tinted loch to our right yonder—

"As idle as a painted ship
Upon a painted ocean."

And in about an hour, with the unpleasant feeling that my holiday is now rapidly drawing to a close, I find myself once more at Jack's hospitable abode.

Next day brought an epistle from my old clerk, the contents of which were not to be either gain-said or put aside.

And so, in a very few hours more, I was *en route* towards the south, Shamchester and my dismal office in Chancery Court looming in the distance, not very pleasant objects in contrast with what I was leaving behind.

Perchance, however, I may ere long have another "Peep at the Highlands," for as he wrung my hand at parting, Jack whispered in my ear—

"Ethel has taken a great fancy to you, old fellow, and bade me say she hopes you will contrive to come up here again soon after Christmas—to the wedding!"

A WATERCRESS TEA.



WE were requested to be at the Agricultural Hall one evening by five o'clock, and were punctual. Mr. Groom received us. He it is who, in passing through Farringdon Market, seems first to have thought of the state of the thousand wandering and isolated cress

and flower sellers of this huge metropolis. Himself young and engaged in business, he saw how difficult it would be to be of service to them; but he was not discouraged. The result of some six years' labour was before us, in three tables spread

for six hundred guests. One of the long galleries of the enormous hall was devoted to the feast, and the whitest of linen and freshest of ware adorned each board.

Mr. Groom told us that he believed hundreds of these poor souls had not only been aided in their sore temporal need by the mission he had been permitted to begin, but had been spiritually turned from darkness to light. We were struck by one remark he made with much simplicity. "It is strange," he said, "that those who have given up Sunday trading have not been losers, but rather gainers." Nothing could be more skilfully or quietly organised than the proceedings of that evening. At about a quarter to six some forty or fifty lady-

helpers were requested to take their places. Each had a *vis-à-vis*, and twelve chairs on either side. A waiting-gentleman attended on every pair of ladies, so there was no confusion.

At six o'clock the doors were opened, and a motley crowd streamed in. Women and young girls outnumbered the old men and youths, though both sexes and all ages were represented. There were few children, because two hundred and fifty juvenile vendors are to have a separate treat shortly. Infants, however, were numerous.

Hard must have been the heart that did not ache as those six hundred ill-clad, dejected-looking human beings filed down between the tables, and quietly took their seats as directed. Although dressed in their best, and scrupulously clean, poverty peeped out at every corner, and nowhere more than from the crumpled flower or faded ribbon, meek attempts at adornment. They looked neither to the right nor left, but, as if conscious of observation, cast their eyes downwards.

When all were seated, the urns were brought in, and placed between every two helpers on the narrow table. As they were furnished with two taps, cups were rapidly filled. The male aids disappeared, and returned with plates heaped up with thick meat-sandwiches and bread-and-butter, one of which was placed before each guest. Grace being sung, the projector invited all to the enjoyment of the meal provided, and gave permission to those who could not eat the whole of what was set before them, to take the remainder away. This was received with visible approbation.

Eating and drinking restore the weary frame and revive the depressed spirit. We all grew more cheerful by degrees, and conversation flowed. At our particular table we talked much and even laughed frequently. As the "uninebriating beverage" disappeared in an endless succession of cups, the wan faces kindled, and confidence succeeded. In tea, truth. We soon knew one another's histories, and although they were sad enough, they would probably have seemed sadder without the viands. Three mothers with infants in their arms sat side by side, and, as mothers do, compared their babies. Two were tolerably flourishing, but the third was a miserable specimen of babyhood—a small, wizened, animated corpse. It must have been nurtured on gin and opium, for no natural influences could have produced a creature so little human. The mother, too, was pale and thin, with a dejected face terribly suggestive of the gin-palace. Contrasting with her was a large, red-faced Irishwoman, who had a bunch of shabby pink flowers in the front of her bonnet. She was as voluble as the other was reticent.

"I sell flowers," she said; "bless yer heart, I left the basketful outside when I come in for me tea. I must sell 'em to-night, or I'll be the loser,

for they'll wither by to-morrow. I've had twelve children, and one's at home, out o' work, ill, and there's a grandchild waitin' for me cake, and plenty o' mouths for all I lave."

"My baby have eat all my meat!" said one of the mothers proudly.

"And my little girl have had half my cake, because she means to take all hers home to her brother!" said another almost exultantly.

A good-sized plum-cake was given to each guest, when the first course was disposed of.

As a rule, they seemed to eat sparingly, as if too weary to be hungry.

"I always had a small appetite," said one apologetically, as she stowed away the greater portion of her meal for the children at home; "but I *have* enjoyed a bit of meat. 'Tis quite a treat for them as never gets it. Yes, I sell watercreases, and walk all day long. The worst of it is, my shoes are all in holes."

This woman's manners and appearance were especially pleasing and suggestive of "better days." She talked much to a lad who sat next to her, and was the only one at our portion of the table who ate with avidity. The contents of his plate disappeared quickly, as did cup after cup of tea. This youth had a singularly handsome and interesting face. The profile was classical, and the eyes large and deeply grey. It was a countenance you could not forget. He might have been eighteen or thereabouts, and spoke good English.

"I have had no work for a fortnight," he said; "I don't know where to get any. I sell flowers because I have nothing else to do. I can neither read nor write. I have no home and no friends since I buried my mother."

Tears came into his eyes at these pathetic words. He was recommended to apply at the Mission House, where he would not only receive spiritual teaching, but be put into the way of finding employment. He promised to do so; but he kept his large melancholy eyes fixed on us, as if help must follow kind words. He was on our left; on our right was a young girl about his age, but apparently more prosperous. She could speak of the Mission, for she belonged to it. "I go to the meetings," she said. "I was at one the other night all about the blind. None of them can see at all. Isn't that dreadful?" She was evidently contrasting her own poor state favourably with theirs. This girl was the neatest of those with whom we came in contact. She had on a light print gown and brown-holland apron, both spotlessly clean. She was fair and pretty, with an expression half-shy, half-defiant.

"I sell flowers. I get up at four, and walk three miles to market. We must be there early, or the flowers are not fresh. When I have made up my bunches, I walk about and try to sell them. Some-

times I sell them all—not always. We don't get much profit at best," she continued.

"No, indeed," interrupted a neighbour; "I sells creases, and walks four miles there and four back to get 'em. You see they're perishable, and what's left won't do for the next day. That's how we lose. I was lucky to-day, and sold quickly, or I couldn't 'a come here. Yes, I walked here too; for I can't afford to ride. I'll 'a walked over twelve mile to-day; but I've enjoyed myself."

"I'll tell you why we sell flowers and creases," said a third. "We must do something, and we can buy a lot for threepence. We couldn't set up in any other trade without money. Three o' my children sells 'em too; the eldest is turned nine. They'll have their treat soon, poor dears. What do we do in winter when there's no flowers and creases? Why, we starve; that's what we do."

Here it may be well to state what Lord Shaftesbury has done to avert this terrible starvation evil. He has lately given capital for the institution of a loan fund, by means of which coffee-stalls, baked potato ovens, stalls and urns for the sale of stewed eels and soup, and barrows and baskets, with a supply of winter necessities, are let out at two shillings per week. When the borrower has paid the full value of his loan—*i.e.*, between two and three pounds—it becomes his own property.

This admirable method of promoting self-support and self-respect has been successful, and although over a hundred people have thus already been supplied with a stock-in-trade, no defaulter in payment has, as yet, been found.

When the urns were emptied, and the remnants of the feast packed up in handkerchiefs for transportation, grace was again sung, and the guests were requested to file off quietly, and take their seats in a large hall prepared for their accommodation.

They quickly obeyed orders; and as they again passed between the long tables, we remarked a change in all. Their step was brisker, their faces brighter; they looked cheerfully from side to side, and responded to questions and good wishes. Even their shabby and often ragged clothing seemed more respectable. Curtseys, nods, smiles, replaced the stolid indifference of their entry, and repeated assurances that they had "enjoyed themselves—they couldn't help it—such a good meal, and plenty of it," must have repaid the projector and his assistants for their labours.

In the course of half an hour a different scene presented itself: a huge hall, filled with these poor people, all comfortably seated, and a platform overflowing with the helpers and others, in the centre of which was Lord Shaftesbury. A polite watercress lady made a place for us between

herself and a friend, so that we were able to hear the unrestrained comments of their class, and to find that they could appreciate sympathy, and understand sermons.

Unlike many platform discourses, those delivered on this occasion were well adapted to the audience, and for the most part uttered by men who understood them well. If they instilled a home truth one moment, they raised a laugh the next; and the audible comments and applause were guarantees of approval.

A wish expressed that the Shah had been there to see what Christianity could effect, was met by, "I wish he was—then *we* should 'a seen un." A recommendation to attract the husbands from the ale-house by bright faces and clean table-cloths was variously received. One woman nudged her neighbour with, "That's true; they likes 'em." Another muttered, "How are we to get 'em?" A third looked resolutely severe. A noise at the bottom of the hall, interrupting the speaker, called forth many comments. "Shut up down there." "Them people don't know how to behave." "I wonder where they learnt manners!" "They're no better than brutes." A discourse on flowers was met with strained attention, and natural similes with smiles.

The applause drowned all further attempts at speech. The women clapped with more than Amazonian vigour, and forgot past weariness in present enthusiasm. It seemed as if they never would have enough of it, and their hands, hard though they were, must have ached before it ceased.

"I didn't walk my four mile and back for what I could get, but just for a pleasant evening," said one of them. "There's a spache for ye—an' shure he must be Irish, God bless him—an' may he live for ever—an' may we all mate here agin in a twelve-month!" exclaimed another, whose brogue proclaimed her nationality.

It was past ten when the party broke up. The six hundred dispersed quietly; and we cannot better close this sketch than by employing the time occupied by their slow and difficult egress, in considering the means used to better their condition.

The watercress, flower, and fruit sellers' Mission is carried on by a band of voluntary workers, under the superintendence of its founder.

They have already succeeded in establishing a Sunday-school, free evening-school, penny-bank, barrow and basket club, patching-class for boys and girls, poor women's working class, children's and women's services, prayer-meetings, a winter soup-kitchen, at which four hundred poor souls are relieved; destitute children's dinners twice a week, providing three hundred hot meat meals; sick, district, and tract visiting; a clothing-club, and

open-air services. They have also had Christmas dinners, lectures, and occasional entertainments.

This has been effected in a few years in a district containing seven thousand people, where

there is neither church nor chapel, but which provides for thirsting souls thirty-two beer-shops! The inhabitants are principally costermongers, labourers, and German and Italian musicians.

ANNE BEALE.

HESTER MORLEY'S PROMISE.

BY HESBA STRETTON,

AUTHOR OF "THE DOCTOR'S DILEMMA," ETC. ETC.

CHAPTER THE FIFTY-FIRST.

BROUGHT TO LIGHT.

MADAME LAWSON, who was prone to avoid the day-light, which she declared not worthy of its name in England, proceeded homewards in the dusk, without meeting with any molestation. She had not paid her son and the garret any visit since the return of John Morley and Hester the night before; and Lawson had failed to come down to his workroom, where, indeed, he had been but little during the last three months, though Mr. Waldron had continued to pay him and his mother their usual wages. Madame experienced no anxiety on his account. The affection existing between them was easy and cool, and made pleasant by the natural amiability of the light-hearted old woman. She knew her son to be quite capable of taking care of himself, and of making himself happy by means of his favourite drug. It had never troubled her that he should indulge in the use or abuse of opium. All men must have their little vice to keep them virtuous, was her equivocal maxim; and she was perfectly content that her son's should be so harmless, and give so little trouble. Was not Milord Waldron a hundred times more interesting for that little fault of his?

She ascended the long flight of stairs briskly, feeling nearly equal to the difficult feat of singing as she mounted. She lifted the latch, and entered the dark room, humming a merry little song. Probably her son had left the match-box and the lamp upon the table, and she groped her way to it, stumbling against her *chaufferette*, which was in her way, and uttering a *malheur* against it. Her fingers feeling about the small table came in contact with something cold, clammy, and motionless. She laid her hand on it, and found that it was a hand, which neither stirred nor grew warm at her close touch. Another movement of her groping fingers brought them to the bowed head of her son, with the cold damp brow resting on the table. Then she shook him, and called loudly into his ear; but he did not answer. The next moment she felt sure he was dead!

Lawson's mother sat down in the dark to think, not caring to light a candle now. She was a

foreigner in a foreign land, and only knew three persons to whom she could communicate this horrible surprise. If she were to rush down-stairs screaming, and making an alarm, she would have all the neighbours rushing into her room, to whom she could say nothing, and who could say nothing to her.

She was sorry for her son, and a few tears stole down her smooth old face unseen by any eye. But how did she know what the laws of England would require of her? It was possible that, being a stranger, or of a different religion, they might demand the revenge of justice from her. Oh, that she had never quitted Burgundy! What would become of her now? What was she to do?

After a few minutes' very troubled reflection, she decided that she could do nothing but go and tell Hester. Rose was asleep; and Robert Waldron's house she did not know. She raised herself slowly and with difficulty, as if old age had given her its first unkind touch. It seemed necessary now to lock the garret-door, lest any intruder should go in; and with trembling fingers she took the key out of the wards within, and put it into the key-hole on the outside. She had not lighted a lamp, or looked round her room, and she left it in undisturbed quiet and darkness. Then she went down the long, narrow staircase, slowly, and out into the court, and down the street, with her terrible story. It was a black shadow creeping across towards the glorified hour of Carl and Hester's betrothal.

Lawson's mother had no sooner entered John Morley's house, than a man who had been loitering on the opposite pavement strode quickly across the road, and stopped her. She started with a half-uttered shriek, but Robert Waldron's voice quickly pacified her alarm.

"Good evening, madame," he said; "I was waiting here to see you coming out, or going in. How are they all to-night?"

"Oh, Milord Waldron!" she cried, clinging to him entreatingly; "come with me, come! He is dead, my son Jean! You know my son? I come from finding him dead and cold, and I said I must go and tell Hester. But you will come, is it not so, Milord Waldron?"

"Calm yourself," said Robert, in a soothing tone, "and certainly I will return with you, madame. Tell me your story tranquilly as we walk along. Did you say your son was dead?"

He walked up the street beside her, listening to her breathless and incoherent account, and thinking she was very probably mistaken, and that Law-

vaded the room, and the box which had held his favourite drug lay open and empty at his feet.

There was a shock to Robert Waldron's sensitive temperament in this discovery, which formerly would have made him eager to throw upon some one else the uncomfortable burden. But a great change, a new birth, had been effected upon him.



"GOOD EVENING, MADAME!"

son's drugged sleep was only a little more profound than usual. On the ground floor of the house he procured a light, and went on up the stairs which he had so often trodden for Hester's sake. He entered the room, and stood still for a moment to look about him. Lawson was sitting in the same chair and place where Hester had found him the night before, but his face was buried upon his arms on the table. Robert put the light down beside him, and touched his hand. There was no doubt that he was dead. A faint scent of laudanum per-

He touched the dead hand again solemnly and reverently; then turned to the forlorn old woman, who stood at his side, trembling from head to foot.

"Yes," he said gently, "yes. Your poor son is dead; but be comforted. I will take care of you. He must have died sleeping; he did not suffer much, and he was no longer young. He was not many years younger than you, madame."

"I was seventeen when he was born," answered his mother, wiping her eyes somewhat needlessly. "Oh, Milord Waldron, send me back to Burgundy."

I wish you would carry me back to Burgundy at once."

"You shall go," he said; "I will send you back as soon as possible. But now you must take a note for me to the doctor. You know Mr. Grant's house?"

"Oh, yes, yes!" she replied eagerly, "I will run; and then, must I come back here?"

"No," said Robert, seeing how much she dreaded it, "you may go to Hester; but do not tell her a word; not one word to-night."

Lawson's mother did not delay her departure; and Robert was soon left alone in the room with the dead man. He scarcely knew why he had not gone himself for Grant; and yet at the first moment of discovery it had seemed wrong to abandon the room again with its solitary and lifeless occupant, and he could not ask the frightened mother to stay in it. It was cold and dark. The hidden face of the corpse was something appalling. Robert shivered as he looked round him, and his memory grew very busy with his past visits here. Of all the places in the world this poor garret was the one where he had seen Hester oftenest. And now in her stead there was a silent corpse, whose face he could not see, and which he shrank from touching.

He looked, however, more steadfastly at the dead man, and saw that there had floated to the bare floor at his feet several sheets of paper, closely covered with writing. Robert stooped to gather them together, and carried them to the light. They were written in English, and could not be any special communication to his mother. Rather, no doubt, they were intended as some explanation of his deed. The poor wretch might have destroyed himself intentionally; and these lines would give him reason.

Standing at the other side of the table, with Lawson's corpse opposite to him, Robert Waldron put the scattered leaves together, and read their narrative. The first page was dated nearly four months back, on the night when John Morley fled from Little Aston; and the rest had been written at various times since, sometimes only a few words being inserted in trembling characters, whilst at others the writing was clear and firm, and proceeded smoothly, as if the writer had found pleasure in his task.

"To-night, I, Jean Lawson, begin to write my confession, which will clear all other persons of blame concerning the events which have happened in my master's house. Nobody will ever know how I have loved Hester. She has been my daughter, my queen, my goddess. I remember her mother, my master's wife, whose name was Elinor, coming into my workroom one day. She carried a tiny, white creature in her arms, and she said, 'Lawson, this is my little girl, and I wish every-

body in the world to love my baby.' She smiled upon me like an angel; and I made a vow on the bended knees of my soul, that that little child should be dearer to me than any other creature in heaven or earth. After that my master's wife died.

"My master was too much wrapped up in his grief to take notice of his young child. He left her in the hands of a careless nurse, and I used to hear the baby's cries up into my workroom. Then I would run down and carry her away with me, and the nurse was content enough. I made her a cradle of an old box, which I swung to the beams by ropes, and there the baby slept sometimes, while I sang and hammered away at my work. She soon learned to love the red and gold bindings, and as soon as she was old enough she would sit for hours at the end of the press, watching me lay on the gold-leaf, and colour the margins. I taught her the A B C.

"My master was getting rich very fast. Well, that was good; that was what I wanted. There was not much spent in the house, and every year we put by a good large sum. I worked early and late, and never asked for more wages. Other masters came and said, 'I will give you twice, three times as much;' but I never dreamt of leaving John Morley. We were gathering a dot for Hester, that she might be rich, and marry well. She was seven years old, I was forty-three, and my master was thirty-five. We both worked hard and spent little. Good! she would be very rich by the time when we must look out for a husband.

"If I shut my eyes now, I see Hester again, as she was when she was seven years old. She began to take thought for her father, for the house, for me. Already she was a little woman. Sometimes she laughed, and made me laugh; but she was never merry and mischievous like other children. She had grown up too much with elderly people, who were always grave and often unhappy. But the child was not unhappy, that I swear. There was no truth in that plea of my master's for bringing another woman into his wife's place.

"About this time I began to see Hester's mother, whether in vision or reality I cannot tell. But she came now and then, a faint, bright, thin appearance as of shining mist, with her face in it, and sometimes a hand, with the finger pointing. I saw it as often by day as by night. Hester could never see it, though she would go so near as to touch the shining mist. I did not know whether to like this appearance or not; but I grew so accustomed to it that I always worked better when it was there. Moreover it helped me. If I doubted what device to work upon my binding, the finger pointed out one, which always proved to be the best. I suppose nobody in all the country round could do work like mine. But if I had taken higher wages from my master, that shining cloud would have

vanished away. I have seen Hester, in her play, touch the shadowy hand without knowing it.

"But one day I went down to my master's room with some finished work, and there was a girl with him—a laughing, giddy, flaunting girl, who was standing close beside him. I felt all at once a horrible dread and hatred creep through me. Something said, either in my ear or only in my heart, 'That woman will be John Morley's second wife!' They had not seen me, and I stole away with the cold sweat upon my face. After that the appearance was of a woman in great sorrow, who looked at me with trouble in her eyes. But what could I do?"

"It was a dreadful misfortune to happen. If my master had died, there was a little fortune for Hester, and I would have managed to carry on the business for her. But another wife, and other children, maybe! I saw Hester about to become a step-child, a forlorn little drudge, forgotten and neglected by her father.

"I loathed that woman; I abhorred her. I hated the jingle of her piano, and her loud singing, which reached me up in my quiet room, and scared away the shining vision. Then the money kept flying like sparks from an anvil. She must have her silks and satins, and laces, and a drawing-room, and more servants. My master was befooled by her. I saw Hester would come to poverty. She was not unkind to her; she even made believe to love her, and whenever the child came to see me, we heard her shrill, hateful voice calling, 'Hester—Hetty!' Perhaps it was because she no longer played there, that her mother never came to my workroom.

"But I saw her once again, and I told Hester of it. I saw her sitting by my fire, with her head bowed down upon her hands, as one in very sore trouble of mind.

"Then my master's second wife brought disgrace upon him.

"I thought I could not hate her more than I had done, but I hated her a hundred-fold more after that. I saw my master, the night after she left him, go into Hester's room in the dead of the night, ready to take her life and his own. I had stayed in the house for very fear of that, to save the child. I remember striking a boy a heavy blow for saying that Hester was her daughter.

"Ten years or so after that, I saw the man who had been our ruin, prowling about our house, and I stole back to my room for one of the press-pins. He walked up and down with his head bent, until he came close to where I stood in the entrance of the side-passage, and I struck him, as I would have set my heel upon any venomous snake. He fell in an instant, and I hurried home. My mother was come to live with me then. I cleaned the press-pin with ashes, and carried it back the next

morning. I was not altogether sorry that I had missed killing him.

"But I missed killing her, too. My hand betrayed me a second time. It came about in this way. I was staying late on the Saturday night, and my master was gone out of the house, when all at once I heard the old jingle of the piano coming up to my room. I knew it could be no one else save her. I had waited for this hour many years. I took up my press-pin again, and crept downstairs through the old printing-rooms into the other part of the house. The drawing-room door was ajar, and I looked in. She was sitting at her piano, with her back towards me, and she did not hear me go in.

I thought she was dead after I struck her, and I felt glad that I had revenged Hester, my master, and myself. Then I went home.

"Hester came in just now. They are come back, her and her father, and are going down to their own house, though they know she is there. I shall never enter it again. Sometimes I think it would be well for me to go, as my mother wishes me, to Burgundy; but then I have no money. We are all poor—my master, Hester, and myself. I am writing this to explain to my master, and to any other persons he may think fit to show it to, how all these things have come about.

"I did everything for the sake of Hester, who was as the apple of my eye ever since I saw her first, a small, white creature in her mother's arms."

CHAPTER THE FIFTY-SECOND.

CHECKMATED.

ROBERT WALDRON read the papers before him with an aching heart. Where was his punishment to cease? At what other points in his career was the ever-widening circle of his early sin to reach him? He had never suspected Lawson's enmity all these years; and now it had wrought so strongly, being baffled and thrown back upon itself, that it had driven him to suicide. The sound of Grant's foot upon the stairs was welcome, yet when he entered Robert could not look him in the face. He only spoke in a broken and smothered voice.

"The poor fellow has destroyed himself," he said.

"No," answered Grant, almost cheerfully; "I have been expecting this any time for the last twelve months. He consulted me for a heart disease, for which he was using opium, the only relief he could have. I knew he could not last long; but it is possible he may have met with a little excitement which hastened the end. This is no case of suicide."

"Thank God!" cried Robert. Grant's words were an untold relief to him. If they only proved correct when he came to examine the man, he would

take heart, and go forward bravely to meet whatever lay beyond him in the future.

"You had better go to my house, and wait for me there," said Grant, and Robert took his advice willingly. Grant followed him in the course of an hour, and verified his statement. Lawson's opium box had been emptied, but that had not caused his death, which was the result of an access of the disease, long anticipated by them both. Robert gave him his confession to read, and Grant ran through it rapidly.

"Strange!" he said, "strange that this never occurred to me, at least! I felt reluctant to lay the sin at John Morley's door; yet I missed the clue from not having known Lawson long enough. Shall we make this paper public?"

"To what end?" asked Robert; "scarcely any person, besides ourselves, knows anything of the past. It was written for John Morley, and we will give it to him. Let him do what he likes with it."

"And the mother?" suggested Grant.

"I will send her back to Burgundy," he answered; "a small pension will make her happy. Strange tales will she have to tell of English life!"

He smiled a little sadly, but went home with a heart the lighter because it had missed having a great increase to its burden. Early the next morning he presented himself at John Morley's door, which was opened to him by Lawson's mother, her face somewhat troubled, and the fine wrinkles about her eyes strongly marked, but bearing no light malice or cunning about them.

"Well, my son?" was all she could utter.

"He is dead," said Robert. "You have not spoken a word to Hester?"

"Not one word!" replied madame; "the young curé was with her when I returned; alone, monsieur, absolutely alone! These English manners do not please me. Bah! The little one permitted him to kiss her before he went. I thought, Milord Waldron will be discontent; but they did not see me. Then my son is veritably dead?"

"You shall go home to Ecquemenville at once," replied Robert; "I will send my servant with you to start you from Folkestone; and I intend to allow you a small pension."

"Seigneur!" cried the old woman, clapping her hands together, "that is good! I shall live again in the sunshine, and sing my little songs to those who love them! He was not a bad son, monsieur, and I grieve for him; but it was very triste here in England, and he was morose, sombre. If made-moiselle marries the curé I shall have no more pleasure in England. Wherefore do you not persist in marrying her?"

Robert made no answer, for Hester was passing through the entrance, and came forward to speak to him. There was a new light in her eyes, and a colour on her grave face, which he understood well.

He gave her the packet for her father, and then went away, for the hour was drawing near when the quiet funeral of his little child would start from John Morley's door.

It was the evening of the same day that Carl, who had been walking with Robert through the park towards Aston Court, happened to encounter Miss Waldron on his return. They met almost upon the spot where he had first spoken of his love for Hester. He recollected it distinctly, and her conduct afterwards, which had effected his separation from his first church. But Carl's charity was of the order which hopeth all things, endureth all things, and never faileth. She had once been his friend, and to her he had often poured out his heart, when it was overcharged. A halo was about her still, for the sake of past times, and, let it be owned, for the sake of the hopeless love she had borne for him, which had perhaps been the real spring of all her after unkindness. He approached her with an outstretched hand, which she feigned not to see.

"Mr. Bramwell," she said coldly, "you have taken your own course, I believe. I warned you against Hester Morley; I warned you in ample time, but you followed your own rash and unregenerate nature. I trust you may never repent of it."

"I never shall repent of it," answered Carl warmly; "thank God, Hester will be my wife as soon as I have a home ready for her! But let us be friends again, Miss Waldron, though I neglected your advice. Your brother and I are friends at last; your father loves me and Hester; do not let there be coldness and estrangement between us. We may see each other often. When we do meet let us meet as friends."

"There is no unfriendliness on my part," said Miss Waldron frigidly; "with due consideration of the difference in our position, I am quite willing to meet you on a proper footing. Hester also. I have shown her many kindnesses, and no conduct of hers can efface the remembrance of them from my memory. You may give my best wishes to her, Mr. Bramwell."

She walked on with a stately step, leaving Carl in as uncomfortable and irritated a frame of mind as was possible to him. But her heart was swelling with mortification and disappointment. She could not bear to think of Hester married to Carl, eloquent and popular, with a growing fame, while she remained single and obscure in the retirement of Little Aston. She ran through the list of chances which, in the pride of her youth and position, she had cast away, and she sighed bitterly over them. Only one remained to her, and that was David Scott. True, he was very deaf, so deaf that she could not whisper gentle hints into his ear; but he looked at her very significantly. He was a good preacher, moreover, and sooner or later would

make a mark, as Dr. Hervey assured her. With her aid, what height might he not attain? She gained her room, and deliberated long upon the question. Then she reached out her desk, selected the paper which bore the crest of her family, and wrote the following epistle :—

"MY VERY DEAR FRIEND,—Though our friendship has reached a point when I might well address you by your Christian name, my pen still refuses to write it. I feel as if I must receive your sanction for so endearing a familiarity. Yet David is a very dear name to me. I wonder if men are as susceptible to the dread of making too close advances as women like myself are? I can very well imagine that when a young man, however worthy, looks up to a woman who occupies a prominent position, either for her rank, her wealth, or her piety, he may say to himself, 'Ah! such a being is not for me!' The less worthy of your sex are more adventurous. Under a pretext of friendship Carl Bramwell advanced so near to me that he had well-nigh gained his point, had not the snare been broken, and I had escaped. How thankful I am now that he did not win upon me by his specious eloquence! I never knew till of late the difference between real and fictitious merit. Since I have known you my eyes have been opened indeed! Your last letter lies before me, every word in it is a precious and polished gem; they come from your heart to my heart.

"I wonder if you can understand that we are equals. If I possess advantages denied to you, on the other hand Providence has bestowed upon you gifts mysteriously withheld from me. I acknowledge this. Dear David, your intrinsic merit makes you too lowly in your own eyes. You could never be guilty of the presumption of Carl Bramwell, yet it would be no presumption in you. You are the true gold, he is only the glittering bauble. Oh! I am afraid you will misunderstand me! Shall I tear up this letter, which I have written with a throbbing heart and tearful eyes? No. You may still be saying to yourself, 'Such a being is not for me!' You would be a help indeed to me on the upward and onward path. How I should lean upon you! How I would assist you to the best of my poor abilities! My father has a great regard for you. He asked me—*me*—the other day why you did not marry. I could give him no satisfactory reply. Shall I ever be able to do so?

"It would never strike your pure mind to inquire into my worldly circumstances. If I should ever marry without my father's approbation, I should even then be blessed with £500 a year in my own right. But my father has often urged me to select a partner for life, and leaves my choice unbiassed. Until now I could not make up my mind. It is made up now. I shall marry but one being, or remain for ever single. If you wish to know his name, I will tell you in my next letter.

"Oh! I am very much afraid that you will misunderstand me! I shall await your reply in great agitation. Do not prolong it, my very dear David. Send me but a word, a line, by the bearer.

"Yours for ever,
"SOPHIA W."

Miss Waldron was satisfied with her effusion, and slept soundly after it. In the morning she despatched her missive by a footman, who received orders that the carriage was to take him and his weighty packet to the lodgings of Mr. Scott, and wait until an answer was ready. She partly hoped that he would catch the hint, and return to her in the carriage; but only a short note was brought back. She opened it, and read it with unutterable emotions.

"DEAR MISS WALDRON,—I understand you quite well. Unluckily I am engaged to a cousin in Glasgow, who would not give me up, I am sure. I shall keep your letters as a mark of your esteem.

"Believe me,
"Yours faithfully,
"DAVID SCOTT."

David Scott was wise in his generation. No troubles disturbed his relations with his church; and

though Miss Waldron was distant she was always deferential. He married his cousin in due time, and they were received as formal visitors at Aston Court. Miss Waldron continued to shed a bright and unweary light upon the little church at Little Aston.

CHAPTER THE FIFTY-THIRD.

LAST WORDS.

HESTER'S sorrow for Lawson was very real, but it hung over her present happiness only as a thin cloud shadows a bright sky. They told her that his sudden death had been long impending; and though they did not show her the confession he had written, Carl said he had owned to being guilty of those acts of violence and revenge which they had all attributed to her father. Carl had still a few days to stay at Little Aston, days of a quiet but profound gladness; and then he went back to his charge in London, whom he astonished by a happy and buoyant eloquence in his sermons which they had not remarked in them before.

Rose lingered through the winter, dying so slowly and peacefully that it could scarcely be called death—"the hours gliding by with down upon their feet." A gleam of her old light-heartedness returned now and then, with a pathetic beauty in it. The feebleness of her smiles, and the faint ripple of laughter from her lips, smote painfully upon John Morley's spirit. Yet he knew it was best for her to go. Some lives cannot blossom and bear fruit until they are transplanted into more genial climes. She was too weak a creature to work any work worthy of repentance, such as a stronger woman may do, who has fallen even lower than she had done. It was well for him to shield and cherish her, as she descended with slow, sure steps down to the portal through which she must pass alone. But he could have done nothing else; and he thanked God for the great boon granted to him.

"Are you very sorry that I must die?" she asked one day, with wistful eyes and voice, when her time was almost ended; "would you wish me to live, and grow strong again?"

"No," he said, his heart swelling with great pity, yet truthful to her, for truth was kindest.

Rose turned away her face from him and the light, but he saw a quiver of pain tremble upon it.

"My child," he said very tenderly, "there will be no sin there; and 'sorrow and sighing shall flee away.' It is a good thing for you to be taken out of the world. But is there anything you desire, anything you can wish to ask of me, which you shrink from asking?"

"No," she answered, with a sob.

"Do you not wish," he continued in a lower and more tender voice, "to see him, Robert, once more before you die?"

"No," she repeated, opening her blue eyes, and looking into his face like a child; "why should I? I have almost forgotten him. He never comes into my thoughts now. Let Hester tell him, if she will, that I have forgotten him—the best thing I can do."

It was but a few days after this, when he was watching her alone in the first quiet dawn of a spring morning, that she called him to her side, with a sharp, quiet tone, which told him that the last moment was come. All the house was silent with that peculiar atmosphere of silence which comes with the night, but which is more felt during the solemn and irresistible approach of light to the world. John Morley was alone with the wife whom he had so passionately loved. He bent over her, a bitter pang piercing him to the heart, yet with gratitude and courage. She raised her eyes to his for the last time.

"You forgive me fully," she whispered, "as fully as God forgives?"

"As fully as God forgives!" he repeated.

"Kiss me," she said, "kiss my lips, as you kissed my child when she was dying."

John Morley bent his face to hers, and laid a long, solemn, agonised kiss upon her lips; and when he lifted up his head, he saw that she was gone from him for ever!

Rose died early in March, and before the end of April John Morley and Hester left Little Aston altogether, taking with them but few of their poor household goods, except the great chair in which Hester's mother had died, the volumes Lawson had bound for her when she was a child, and John Morley's favourite books. Robert Waldron and Carl had chosen a house for them in London, and Annie had been there for a fortnight to superintend the furnishing of it. It was a sunny house, looking upon a square where the lime-trees were just opening their leaf-buds, and two or three chestnut-trees spreading their first broad leaflets to the spring light and breeze: a rural home compared to the gloomy, decayed old house in Little Aston. Mr. Waldron had procured a situation for John Morley, as librarian, with a salary of £300 a year; but this new house was suited to an income fully twice that sum. It was within a pleasant distance of Carl's chapel. The arrangements within were altogether those of a new household, consisting of other members besides Hester and her father. There was a room, still empty and unfurnished, which would make a good study by-and-by. Hester understood it very well, though nothing had been said to her on the subject. This was Carl's home, which she was to occupy a few months yet without him, out of regard to her father's new grief. She would have time to grow at home in it, to give to it the impress of her own taste, to make it more and more ready for him to come to it; and then—

The day after she and her father had entered their new dwelling, Robert Waldron called, and Hester went to receive him alone. She had not seen him since the morning she had stood beside him, looking down on the sweet pale face of his dead child. He appeared much older, but there was an expression of goodness and earnestness upon his face which had not been seen there in former times. He smiled gravely but tenderly upon her, as she advanced to meet him with some shyness and hesitation in her manner. The hand she extended to him bore his ring, which she had slipped on her finger unthinkingly as she came across it in her unpacking. Robert kept her hand in his, looking down upon it, and upon her face, with an air of mingled pain and pleasure.

"Thank you for wearing my ring, dear Hester," he said; "Carl knows of it."

"I have not told him," she answered with a hasty blush.

"But I have," he continued, smiling; "he knows it is only a love which might have been, and he does not grudge me the shadow when he has the substance. Hester, I have become a member of his church."

"I am very glad," she said, with tears in her clear, frank eyes.

"We shall be friends," Robert went on, "we three, as long as we live. Carl will let me come here as familiarly as if I were his brother and yours; and I shall be here very often. Do you know, dear friend, that I have been invited by my father's old constituency to represent them in Parliament? I shall live in London more than half my time, and so not be very far from you. Do you think my visits will be a trouble to your father?"

"I am sure they will not, after a while," said Hester.

"Does he grieve very much for Rose?" he asked.

"Yes," she answered, "but not as he did before. He is cheerful now, and takes a good deal of interest in everything that happens to us both. He has been all over this new house with me, noticing everything, and he is more than content; he is glad to be away from the old place, and to be beginning a new life. It is a new life to him."

"Did she leave no message for me?" said Robert after a pause.

"None," she replied, "only that she had almost forgotten you, and that it was best so."

"Poor Rose! poor little Hetty!" he said, as if speaking to himself only; "yet indeed I was little more than a boy."

He could not altogether relinquish his old plea, which had possessed truth enough to give him some solace in former times. He looked back from a calm height upon all the past, and could trace the hard and crooked paths into which he

had strayed. He had escaped from them, but the mire and clay clung to him even yet, and he stood solidly upon the height he had gained at last.

"Hester," he said, "my father promises himself to be present at your wedding in the autumn."

"And Miss Waldron?" exclaimed Hester in alarm.

"No, not Miss Waldron," answered Robert, smiling, "certainly not. Do you think my sister would come? No; my father and I will be there, if you will give us leave."

"Yes, come," said Hester heartily; and then, remembering herself, was covered with confusion so pretty and delightful, that Robert Waldron could scarcely restrain a sigh of bitterness and regret.

"And poor old Lawson's mother?" said Hester in a tone of questioning.

"I had a letter from her the other day," answered Robert; "she is ravished to be at home again in Burgundy. Hester, I have the mark of Lawson's blow yet; I shall carry it to my grave."

He lifted the hair which fell over his temples, and pushed it back. There was a seam and scar still upon the skin, and, as he said, it would be there till he died. It was but an emblem and a symbol of the inner and spiritual wound, healed indeed, with as much of the pain taken away as could ever be removed in this life; but a wound still, a blemish, a brand upon the beauty of his future life. Carl had come into the room as he spoke, and looked with Hester upon it; and she, putting her hand into his with a tender clasp, bent forward and kissed the scar.

THE END.

GOING TO SCHOOL AGAIN.

HAVING been a militiaman since 1854, I have naturally learned a great variety of drills; indeed for the last ten years or more obsolete red books have supplied me every morning with shaving paper, and I have still got half a "Musketry Instructor" left. While these periodical changes were confined, as they mostly were, to the alteration of words of command, such as "Fours—deep" instead of "Form fours—deep," and "Right wheel" for "Left shoulders forward," or to the expunging of certain evolutions, moving in threes to wit, I managed easily to keep pace with the age; but when the whole system of drill was altered, the positions and duties of the officers in a measure reversed, subalterns taking the captains' position on the flanks, and attending to direction, distance, and covering; when the battalion was no longer a right and left handed machine, but ambidextrous; when companies might be clubbed of malice prepense; then I thought that I should never unlearn all that I had taken so much pains to acquire in the short period of a militia training, and determined to go to one of the schools of instruction, which were opened for the benefit of the auxiliary forces. Two other officers of my regiment agreed to go with me—Smith, who had joined after our disembodiment, somewhere about 1857, and Franks, a recent acquisition who had held a commission in the Line, but found an Indian life incompatible with certain literary labours to which he had devoted himself.

It was on a February morning that our class met for the first time in the barrack-room appointed for it; rather an odd set of boys, averaging five-and-thirty, let us say, though I think the figure should be put higher. We numbered twenty, the militia and volunteer services being about equally represented.

The staff consisted of a Colonel Instructor, a young subaltern to assist him generally, and four drill sergeants. It was the first formation of that particular school, and I fancy that our chief, who was a young man, was rather amused at finding himself teaching such an elderly class; he is used to it probably by this.

His system was a most excellent, indeed the only proper one. It was to begin at the very first page of the red book and go straight through it, without omitting a line on the score of its not being necessary for an officer to know all the details so long as he had a general idea, or any such plea. There was no cramming; what you did learn under him, you learned as thoroughly as an actor does his part.

But this exactness was rather trying to some of us in the early stages. The squad of five I belonged to consisted of Franks and myself (militia), an ex-cavalry major, an exceedingly portly Yorkshire squire, and a wealthy tailor who wore very tight boots (volunteers).

Three of us had flattered ourselves that we had done with the goose-step some twenty years ago, and the other two were not altogether fitted for such a performance. It would have been worth something to a *Punch* artist to have seen us in a line at extended order that frosty morning, with light snowflakes speckling our highly-coloured noses, doing the balance-step under the direction of our sergeant.

"Front—forward. Front—Toe down, if you please, sir" (this to the stout Yorkshireman, who immediately tried to look at the member alluded to, as if there had not been a good three stone of waist between eye and foot)—"forward." And so on across the barrack square. The school for soldiers' children was situated on that farther side, and a troop of urchins came rushing out. They

stood struck with astonishment for a moment at the sight of a row of elderly gentlemen, of varying heights and breadths, balancing themselves on one leg and extending the other, and then burst into a roar of derision, which excited the hot wrath of a passing corporal, who dispersed them vigorously.

We were not kept long at our goose-step and facings however. The sergeants soon saw who had been drilled before, and sorted us accordingly.

The teaching of company drill was very thorough. A company of soldiers (paid extra by Government) was provided for each squad of five, one of whom acted as captain, two as guiders, and two as markers, till all were perfect in the sections to be gone through on that parade. Then they changed places till they had acted in each capacity. Battalion drill was taught in the same manner.

The subaltern assistant was not appointed to instruct, but merely to command the parade when his chief was temporarily absent. Indeed he was a lad who had but lately joined; a nice gentlemanly young fellow, anxious to assist any one who might need it. One day, when we were at battalion drill, he noticed that Smith was carrying his sword in the stiff regulation manner, as if he were marching past, and directly we stood easy he went up and explained to him how much more comfortable it was, on ordinary occasions, to carry it simply by the hilt.

Smith smiled and thanked him as though he had just acquired a wrinkle, but as I had often seen Smith carrying his sword in the way suggested before his Mentor was born, the trifling episode tickled me immensely.

Another little matter amused us all equally. The ex-cavalry officer had great difficulty in unlearning his old drill; when his turn to handle the battalion came he would begin all right, but directly he warned to his work he could not help the words "squadron" and "troops" rising to his lips, and ordering cavalry evolutions, which puzzled the men extremely until they found out what it was all about.

All those who were also unlearning could sympathise with him; it is far more difficult work than learning, and one slight alteration beat all of us. We had been accustomed year after year to give the word of command "Right half—turn" when we wished to move troops diagonally, and that com-

mand was now changed to "Half right—turn," and we could *not* acquire certainty in transposing the two words. Even when one had "Half right" in one's head, "Right half" would come out on the tongue. When assembled in the barrack-room at lunch time, between the parades, we often abused the authorities who had made the minute alteration, and wondered why they had done so.

"Don't you see?" urged Franks, drily, at last; "it's to puzzle the enemy."

And with that vague theory we had to rest content.

That Franks has a vein of dry humour which is sometimes irresistible, though it spoils sadly in repeating. One day he looked out of window and saw a fatigue party crossing the barrack square.

"Well, colonel," he said to our chief, who stood near him, "there is one evolution which the Blankshire militia perform rather better, I think, than your men."

"Indeed!" said the colonel, rather disgusted; "what is that?"

"Why, carrying coals. I do wish you could see our fellows carry coals."

Position drill and musketry we learned by connecting drill. Two pupils were placed opposite each other at twenty paces distant, and one first instructed the other, and was then instructed by him.

I was paired off on the first occasion with a fellow pupil who was very deaf, and when, proud of the industry with which I had learned my lesson, I rattled out, with as good an imitation of a drill sergeant as I could manage, "Now, at the word 'Tow,' bring the rifle smartly to the front to the full extent of the left arm," he put his right hand to his ear, and shouted back to me—

"Hey?"

When the weather was very bad, we went into some underground vaults and mounted guard over coal tubs and brooms; and relieved guard; and made grand rounds of ourselves. Altogether it was very good fun, and we learned what we wanted to know, and have P.S. put after our names in the Army List. But for all that a militia officer should be attached to a regiment of the Line instead of going to school, because what he principally wants to learn something about is the interior economy of a regiment, which is of vital importance, and cannot be picked up so easily as mere drill.

"SECOND-COUSIN SARAH."

In our Next Number will appear the opening chapters of a New Serial Story, "SECOND-COUSIN SARAH," by F. W. ROBINSON, Author of "Anne Judge, Spinster," "Little Kate Kirby," etc. etc.

